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ResourceManagement

2nd Quarter 2012
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GFEBS

The background of the top half of the page features a collage of faint, golden-yellow motifs. On the right side, there is a large globe with latitude and longitude lines. On the left side, there are several overlapping architectural drawings, including floor plans and elevations of buildings. The bottom half of the page is a solid, light yellow color.

R M

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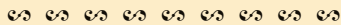
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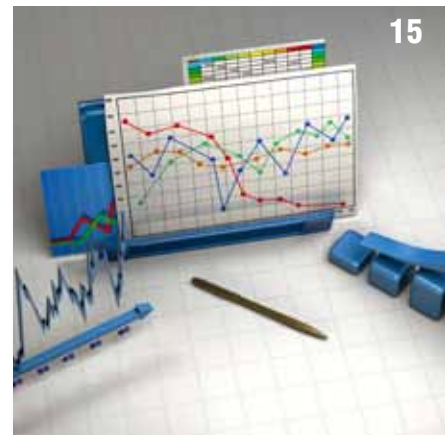
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Pictures ACC, SRMC

Message from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (FM&C): General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBS)

By the Honorable Mary Sally Matiella

Congratulations to the thousands of you from across the Army who have joined the General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBS) family; and welcome to all of you who will be joining the family soon. We have come a long way together; and I know, we have a way to go. Change is never easy. Change as substantial and pervasive as GFEBS is particularly difficult; but as every Soldier knows, difficulty does not denigrate the importance of accomplishing the mission together. We have made great progress. I want to thank you for your cooperation, for your help and for your “can do” attitude.

GFEBS FAMILY EXTENDS WELL BEYOND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OFFICES

With your cooperation, the Army has achieved an amazing deployment record of over 45,000 users in less than four years. We just completed another successful wave adding over 7,000 users from AMC, ATEC, and PEOs. We are moving into our final wave that includes deployment into theater in July. This final effort will bring the GFEBS user community to over 52,000 strong.

Our GFEBS family is large and diverse – it includes many Soldiers and Army civilians who are not traditionally in the financial management community. The reason the family is so large is because GFEBS complies with financial accounting standards and employs an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system. Achieving compliance necessitates participation from beyond the traditional financial and resource management community and wide-spread process change across many Army organizations.

For more than two decades, Congress has produced legislation directing the federal agencies to improve financial management



and produce unqualified financial statements. In the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010, Congress set a deadline for fully auditable financial statements by 2017. In the fall of 2011, Secretary of Defense Panetta provided guidance accelerating the timetable by calling for a Statement of Budgetary Resources in 2014. The Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 (FFMIA) and other directives set the standards for audit compliance. Complying with accounting standards is necessary and capitalizing on commercial ERP technology enable the Army to become auditable.

AUDITABILITY IS IMPORTANT

As a professional accountant, I recognize how important it is to produce auditable financial statements. Unqualified financial statements provide reliable information down to the last detail. This transparency builds confidence in existing financial controls and the integrity of the financial management processes. Increased transparency and audits help prevent waste, fraud and abuse, or expose its occurrence. Reliable financial information is also helpful in assessing if whether better results could be achieved for less. In the tough financial circumstance confronting our Nation, it is very critical that the Department of Defense and the Army produces reliable financial information for decision-making.



AUDITABILITY REQUIRES TRACEABILITY – WHICH REQUIRES THE BIG TENT

GFEBs is one of essential tools for compliance and your participation is necessary, if the Army is to meet this goal. GFEBs provides the Army with a financial system, which for the first time, complies with the FFMIA and other directives that set the standards for auditable financial statements. A key attribute of compliance is traceability, as I mentioned above, this means “down to the last detail.” It’s this requirement for traceability that brings so many non-resource managers into GFEBs as users; because traceability necessitates capturing and consolidating General Fund data from other systems.

CAPITALIZING ON COMMERCIAL ERP TECHNOLOGY

Additionally, GFEBs capitalizes on a commercial ERP technology solution that has long-term cost avoidance benefits; and, it also provides the opportunity to take advantage of the new financial accounting data. For example, GFEBs provides the Army with its first cost accounting system, which enables the Army to track direct costs, allocate indirect costs and produce the “full cost” for outcomes, outputs and services. This ERP solution allows the Army to connect full cost with operational performance data. This solution will provide Army managers with a greatly improved capability to manage the cost, schedule, and performance of their programs. This capability will also provide more accurate, reliable and timely data for cost-benefit and other types of analyses in support of programming and budget formulation decisions by Army leaders.

RE-EXAMINING AND REALIGNING ORGANIZATIONS

Leaders and managers need to recognize that implementing GFEBs does not simply involve swapping one automation system for another.

As noted, traceability necessitates wide-spread participation, i.e., beyond the financial management community. The new participants give rise to process changes and shifting of work. I understand that some organizations have examined these changes and taken actions to realign the staff with the workload. I encourage all leaders and managers to understand the changes and take actions to re-balance organizations to the new business environment.

SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

GFEBs will be the Army’s financial management for many years in the future –it is your system as well as the Department’s. Therefore, we all need to do everything in our power to make it successful. Achieving success requires initiatives across the Army. For example, many commands have established Tier II Help Desks to answer questions and promulgate command-wide common approaches and practices. Additionally, organizations such as TRADOC have established mentoring programs for the less experienced to draw on the knowledge of the more experienced; and the USAR has implemented an aggressive program to re-write SOPs.

I greatly appreciate your efforts to make GFEBs successful. I encourage you to continue to share your insights and tips with each other. And, I encourage you to let us know what needs to be refined, revised or added to meet your needs for everyday financial and operational management, for financial control and for audit readiness.

As I said in the beginning, I recognize that accepting change is at best, difficult. Therefore, I want to thank all of you who have embraced, or at least accepted, the General Fund Enterprise Business System. Thank you for your hard work. I am extremely proud to serve with so many professional Soldiers and Civilians who are committed to improving our Army.

– RM –



The General Funds Enterprise Business System (GFEBS) Commencement Address



By Ms Kristyn E. Jones

As I pondered the right comments to make on the eve of the final General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBS) deployments, I couldn't decide if "Thank You" or "Congratulations" was the more appropriate sentiment. I determined that both were equally applicable. So, "Thank You" to the users and the supervisors. To the development teams and deployment teams. To those who spent weekends fixing errors and those who worked late nights enhancing the system. All of you have played a vital role in the Army's implementation of GFEBS.

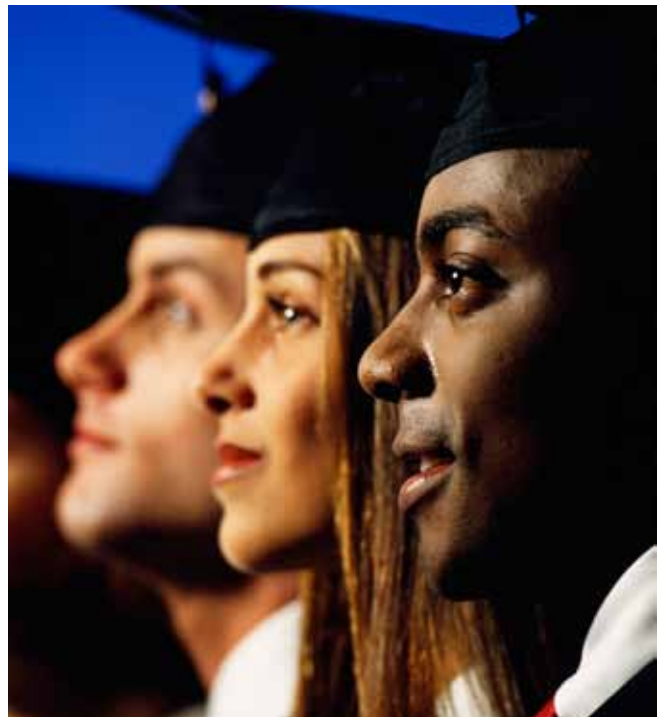
But, "Congratulations" are also in order. What you have accomplished is unprecedented in the Department of Defense and a truly historic achievement. For those of you still climbing out of or about to enter the infamous "Valley of Despair," it may seem almost laughable to associate the word success with GFEBS. But we shall, as this is a one-in-a-lifetime transformation that you are enabling. Hyperbole? Perhaps we may think so, but not others. The poet Emily Dickinson explained, "Success is counted sweetest / By those who ne'er succeed." In the midst of Intermediate Document (IDoc) errors and other challenges it may be hard to realize all you have accomplished. But to those who have tried and failed to modernize

and standardize their systems and processes, you are exceptional. The ones who prove it can be done. And I am honored to have been your partner throughout this extraordinary journey.

"IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT..."

With GFEBS, the Army has gone from hundreds of standalone systems to an integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution that complies with numerous statutory and regulatory requirements and standards. This integrated ERP solution will enable the Army to avoid operating expenses for maintaining, updating and training on all those legacy systems. We are poised to support both a Statement of Budgetary Resources (SBR) audit assertion in Fiscal Year 2014, as directed by the Secretary of Defense and fully auditable financial statements by 2017. Times have changed ... for good.

The development of GFEBS is complete and the deployments are almost over. We have fielded the required capabilities to replace our decades old systems, STANFINS and SOMARDS, with a powerful, enterprise-wide capability that will endure for many years. Using the capabilities of the system we have enabled many "firsts" within the Department of Defense and Army-wide.





GFEBs IS FIRST ERP IN DOD TO ...

- Deploy to regional Unified Combatant Commands;
 - Enable real property management at Joint Bases;
 - Process Foreign National payroll;
 - Disburse vendor funds directly through Treasury (pilot capability);
- and
- Integrate with Medical Logistics.

GFEBs is first Army-wide system to ...

- Utilize a commercial-off-the-shelf ERP technology;
- Consolidate financial management capability for General Fund;
- Be compliant with Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA) and DoD Standard Financial Information Structure (SFIS); and
- Provide cost accounting and management capability.

GFEBs is operational today on the desks of over 45,000 users at nineteen commands and over 200 locations worldwide. We'll add about 7,000 more users in July to complete the Army-wide implementation. The pace of this deployment was unprecedented and the scale is staggering. Some numbers that exemplify this magnitude:

1,650 funds centers

57,000 cost centers

71 countries

475,000 Computer Based courses conducted; 4,500 classroom training sessions provided

\$100 billion obligated through FY12

GFEBs was only able to attain such statistics through the dedication and hard work of users, supervisors, training coordinators, Change Management Deployment (CMD) Network members, and the thousands of others who pulled together to make GFEBs a reality.

“WE’VE ONLY JUST BEGUN....”

Similar to the high school and college graduations that are generally known as “commencements,” the GFEBs program is having its own graduation as we complete years of development and deployment and transition into sustainment. But this is not a time of stagnation; on the contrary, the word commence means “to begin.” Like a graduate eagerly awaiting his first paycheck, we’ll enter a period of benefits realization, the payoff for all of our past efforts. But we can’t relax and rest, as some of the hardest work is yet to come. Achieving the benefits envisioned by the Army will require an additional focus on such areas as system enhancements, audit readiness, system migration, cost management, and institutionalizing our transformation.

System enhancements. While the development efforts associated with GFEBs are done, there is still much to do to enable the system to perform optimally. Two key system enhancements underway include the Human Resource mini-master capability that will reduce system errors while improving reporting for civilian payroll, and the new miscellaneous pay process that will significantly reduce manual efforts by the Army and DFAS and enable more efficient, automated payments. Efforts to improve

continued on pg.5



project management capabilities within GFEBS come to fruition this year and will enable GFEBS to subsume the functionality of many standalone project management systems used throughout the Army. Business Intelligence (BI) continues to evolve in providing more useful reporting capabilities. Recently released BI web services capabilities enable GFEBS data to be shared with other systems. The next BI Release will focus on improved reports for accounts receivable and accounts payable processes. These and many other system enhancements were identified and prioritized by the Functional Governance Board (FGB). This Board meets monthly to evaluate current operational performance and make decisions on functionality to be included in GFEBS. Each Process Owner and each Command participates on the Board to ensure the capabilities added to GFEBS hit the mark in providing improved functionality to the user community.

Audit readiness preparation. GFEBS had already been declared “substantially compliant” with Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA) requirements and is awaiting a final report from the Army Audit Agency (AAA) on the remaining requirements. The project is also improving controls and procedures to meet Federal systems standards, including the Federal Information Systems Management Act (FISMA) requirements. The Army is utilizing GAO’s Federal Information System Controls Audit Manual (FISCAM) to assess GFEBS’ audit readiness, to include items such as physical security of the data center, logical security of application access, validation of converted data, segregation of duties, provisioning, and system configuration controls. Some of the results of these efforts will impact users through user role re-validation processes and new segregation of duty risks to be remediated. These efforts provide the foundation for GFEBS to meet its audit readiness requirements. The program will undergo an examination by an Independent Public Accounting firm beginning in 2012. The examination is a major interim milestone for the Army on the path to achieving an auditable Statement of Budgetary Resources in FY 2014.

System Migration. A key aspect of GFEBS’ benefits realization is the elimination of the very expensive, very complicated legacy systems environment. GFEBS will subsume all or part of over 100 systems, with 20 migrating in 2012 alone. To realize these benefits and shut down these legacy systems we must ensure access to critical data is preserved and all required functionality is inherent in the GFEBS solution. Due to the acceleration of the SBR audit readiness timeline, the Army plans to terminate all use of legacy systems no later than 2014. This accelerated date will require additional focus by all commands on data cleansing, joint reviews, and contract migration. This accelerated schedule will not only

better position the Army for the SBR audit, but will also save nearly a hundred million dollars in system costs.

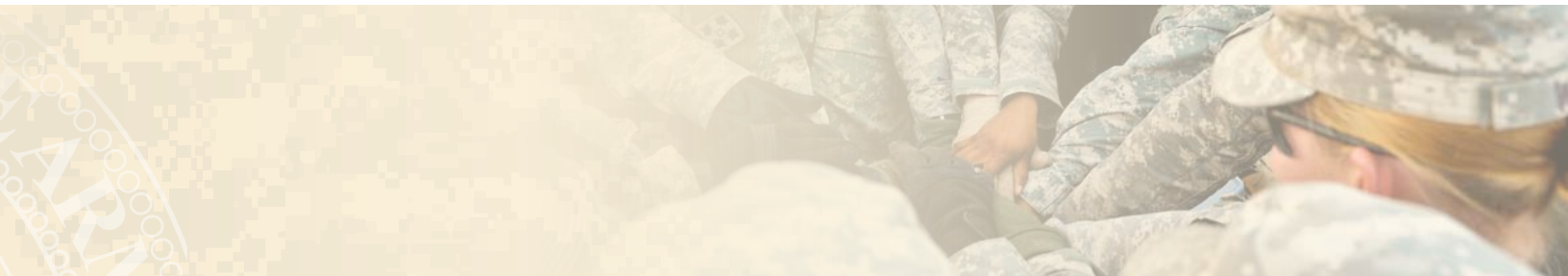
Cost Management. Commensurate with the completion of the GFEBS deployments, the Army will have also enabled another significant achievement—the creation of an enterprise-wide cost model that encompasses the Army’s organizations, products, services, and projects. With this basis for cost accounting in place, the Army will be able to leverage the GFEBS cost capabilities to support improved decision-making. This will play out in a variety of ways—from an improved ability to plan for future funding requirements, to better modeling of OPTEMPO and Base Operations costs, a greater understanding of the impact customer behavior has on cost consumption, and a number of other “what-if” scenarios. The development of cost management as a core competency in the Army will continue to progress, requiring further evolution of cost training, reporting capabilities, and decision making processes to support the Army’s maturation toward a “cost culture.”

Institutionalizing our Transformation. A system, even one as large and complex as GFEBS, is only a tool in enabling transformation. True transformation requires a holistic assessment to ensure people and processes are synchronized with the system change. In the Army lexicon this view is known as “DOTMLPF” Efforts are underway to examine the impact GFEBS has on both civilian and military force structure; doctrine is changing as Financial Management formations become GFEBS-enabled; training is beginning to reflect the discipline that is required by statute and is now enabled by our new systems. Leaders must begin to ask different questions and track new metrics so they can use the capabilities of the system to monitor performance and make better decisions. All these factors must work together to achieve the intended goals of GFEBS.

“LET’S STAY TOGETHER...”

This is not the end of the story. To quote Sir Winston Churchill, “It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.” And the path to further success requires continued communication and teamwork. Governance forums, refresher training, CMD network meetings, on-line resources and a variety of tools will continue to be available to help Commands move from crawl, to, walk, to run as they progress with GFEBS.

To conclude, I want to thank you for your hard work in implementing GFEBS. I hope that you all take a moment to recognize and celebrate our graduation. Job well done! I look forward to our continued partnership as we commence on our journey toward transformed Financial Management in support of our great Army.



“GFEBS & Audit Readiness - Lessons Learned”: FORSCOM Command Level

By Carl David Johnson

Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) reorganized and leveraged “out-of-hide” resources to build an Audit Readiness team with goals and objectives to advance awareness and actively manage lessons learned and corrective actions implementation. We believe this is an extraordinary step – other commands view audit readiness as an additional duty rather than an integral part of their daily operations. We established audit readiness points of contact at our FORSCOM mission support elements (MSE’s) to serve as a conduit in building awareness and collaborating on feedback. Additionally, we established a FORSCOM SharePoint on our G8 portal to communicate audit readiness scheduling efforts and publish lessons learned documentation and guidance as it becomes available. Just recently, the G8 completed a strategic planning effort with audit Readiness included as one of its important objectives.

Audits are performed to ascertain the validity and reliability of information; also to provide an assessment of an organization’s and systems internal controls with the goal of achieving an “Unqualified (clean) Opinion”. We fully support this effort knowing that audits serve three purposes: They support accountability and stewardship, drive improvements in financial management systems and operations, and perhaps most important, they reduce risk by providing assurances about the quality of the financial information leaders, managers and decision-makers rely. Without the incentive that audits provide, Department of Defense cannot get the quality information it needs to manage its resources.

The FORSCOM G-8 Audit Readiness Cell (ARC) accompanies the Army Financial Improvement Plan (FIP) teams during their site visits which included interviewing subject-matter experts to document budget execution processes and to assess internal controls. Discovery efforts were conducted at GFEBS Wave 1 & 2 locations during 2010 & 2011. Limited scope testing was performed at GFEBS Wave 1 locations (Fort’s Benning, Jackson and Stewart) by the Independent Public Accountant (IPA) in



2011 with a “qualified” opinion being issued. Lessons learned are being developed and corrective actions implemented in preparation for additional IPA examinations scheduled for 2012 and 2013. In 2013, audit readiness training is being conducted at GFEBS Wave 3 locations. We actively participate in this installation level training and assessments allowing us to better understand the impacts of implementing the General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBS) and the audit readiness mitigation procedures necessary to ensure we meet the audit ready requirement of 2014. Our next big deliverable from this work will be to review and implement standard operating procedures once published by Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller (ASA (FM&C)).

We recognize that this is not just a G8 effort since the Statement Budgetary Resource (SBR) processes being reviewed and audited touch more than one staff section. Therefore, FORSCOM staff (G8, G4 and IR) have teamed together to achieve the Army’s audit readiness goals by aligning our efforts with the major components of audit readiness including property accountability, financial statements and oversight & standardization of key processes and procedures. Additionally, we’ve engaged other agencies as well (i.e., CPAC, MICC, etc.) who have acknowledged their responsibility in this effort for the processes they manage.

FORSCOM continues to aggressively support this effort by synchronizing across the enterprise. We are positioned to meet financial improvement and audit readiness goals and objectives.

– RM –



“GFEBS & Audit Readiness - Lessons Learned”

FORSCOM: Installation Level

*By Philip Salerno and Jamie Krump
FORSCOM Fort Drum, NY*

The phone is ringing, emails are pouring in, there’s a line outside of your door and you have several deadlines quickly approaching. On top of this, you are being asked to correct internal control deficiencies and prepare for the next Independent Public Accountant/Auditor (IPAs) examination.

What seems like daily organized chaos quickly overwhelms us. How do we then fix internal controls and get ready for Audit Readiness? The rest of this article will discuss some key lessons we learned at Fort Drum and what we implemented to ensure we meet our Audit requirements, establish controls and enhance existing ones.

Communication: After the examination completed in July and the IPAs visited us in October, we knew that to survive the next few years of Audit Readiness we had to open our communication channels and ensure we were all singing the same song. We developed an internal knowledge library on our shared drive that houses the history of the Audit Readiness, preparation work for our first examination, the Statement of Budgetary Resources Audit Handbooks, Financial Improvement Program Reports, and anything Audit Readiness we can get our hands on. We update this library weekly as new documents are made available on AKO or thru our ACOM. We then communicate the updates to the entire leadership team.

While this approach allows all of us to touch the details of Audit Readiness, we needed a tool that would allow our senior leaders to get a snapshot of our progress. We developed an internal quad chart that discusses our successes, challenges, current actions and next steps. This tool has been a great conversation starter and has opened up doors for continued forward progress.

We also found that we are not alone, and that success comes much easier as we communicate and share our trouble areas with each other. We come from different backgrounds and see problems from different angles. As we meet every other day, we find that we complement each other and provide meaningful conversations, solutions and brainstorming that enhances our current Audit Readiness culture.

Prioritization: As we started communicating our goals for Audit Readiness, it quickly became apparent that Audit Readiness needed to be our priority; however, this is easier said than done. In terms of a manager’s day, the most limited resource we have is time. We decided that to properly prioritize Audit Readiness and make it work, this was going to cost us our time; but it is well worth the cost. The Division Chiefs decided that we would meet three times a week for one hour and work on each of the controls in the self assessment. We also invited our friends from MICC when we discussed their specific responsibilities. This also sets the tone for the rest of our teams. They see us huddle in the conference room and understand our enthusiasm and level of commitment. Our teams understand that we are serious about Audit Readiness. This has become infectious, as we are seeing our teams become more passionate about establishing an Audit Readiness culture.



We also developed a dashboard tool that rates our progress with each control. We use a green, yellow and red dashboard to determine what stage we are with each control. For instance, if



we verified the control is established and we conducted a sampling test on the control and the control passed the test, we code the dashboard with green. If we verify the control's existence but have not been able to test is yet, we code it as yellow. We code any control not verified by us as red, regardless if it exists or not. We meet, discuss the yellow and red controls and together determine what actions have to be accomplished to make those controls green. The dashboard has become a critical tool for us as we use this to continue to move towards Audit Readiness.

Integration: We quickly integrated Audit Readiness into everything we do, discuss Audit Readiness at our staff meetings, review controls with the process owners, set up training events to discuss the importance of internal controls and how to effectively implement them in our daily work routines. Audit Readiness is fully integrated into everything we do.

Validation: We didn't just set up meetings and tools to measure our capabilities. We empowered our teams to start validating the existence of the internal controls, establish internal controls where missing and enhance existing ones in a non-attribution format. We communicate that a failed control is not a reflection of the employee,

but rather simply a test of the control. It is more beneficial to identify the weaknesses now than during a full audit; our teams get it and they practice it. They are active in ensuring the controls are in place and are in a working condition. Internal tests and reviews ensure controls are implemented and effective.

It took a lot of time and energy to get us into a routine, a new cultural norm; it requires a lot of time to keep this going. We are not fully Audit Ready yet, but we are well on our way. There is a sense of electricity that you can feel as we successfully test a control and it passes our tests. While we code that control green and move onto the next yellow or red control, we know that we have a lot of work left to do. Even when our control catalogue is fully green, our efforts will not subside; we must continue to test and validate.

Although we are in the early phases of ensuring Audit Readiness at Fort Drum, we are confident in our unquestionable success. We maintain a positive attitude, encourage solid team work, keep an open mind, and don't take changes personally. We are all in this together and need to work hard every day to ensure we develop a cost culture, act as good stewards of the funds, and never accept the status quo. It can always be done better! - RM -

Financial Management Branch: At a Cultural Crossroads

By MAJ Eric Molfino

Authors Note: A mentor and current Sr. RM leader once told me “The best training I ever received as a comptroller was the years I served as a field artilleryman.” That quote has weighed heavily on my mind since the merger was finalized in September 2008 and forms the basis of this argumentative essay.

Calls for merging the Finance Branch and Comptroller Functional Area (FA45) into a new branch originated back in the 1990’s. It was the Army’s transformation to modular brigade-based units that served as the primary catalyst for the integration of these two distinct career fields and gave rise to a financial management (FM) force structure that was both tailorable and scalable for specific missions. Each career field has proven its value and necessity over the last decade of war with the establishment of concepts such as Money as a Weapon System (MAAWS) and support to host nation banking systems that facilitate the economic instrument of U.S. power. The merger called for growing and developing a “multifunctional, multidiscipline officer who possesses skills, knowledge, and experience to execute the finance and resource management mission.” Despite this clarion call for broadened skill sets and increased knowledge and experience for new FM officers, leadership chose to end the integration of experienced combat arms and combat support (CA/CS) officers that previously supplied the Army’s resource managers (RMs) through the career field designating (CFD) process. This decision mutes the call for a truly multifunctional and multidiscipline FM officer and ensures CFD financial managers will disappear from the Army inventory within the next five to ten years. The elimination of experienced CA/CS officers is a mistake that will ultimately reduce the effectiveness and credibility of the FM branch.

CA/CS officers, who have successfully served through company command, possess a deep understanding of the tactical level of the operational Army. Their experience and proximity to the fight has engendered an ability to anticipate and synchronize the resourcing of operations in time and space. Moreover, they understand the operational and fiscal implications of the types of units (IBCT-SBCT-HBCT) executing those operations. It is precisely this CA/CS experience which makes some of these officers exceptionally

well suited for the FM profession. The skilled financial manager not only understands the management internal control process, “but the war fighting doctrine, and the capabilities of their organization as a war fighting instrument.” In short, the ideal financial manager “must master the art and science of war.” Who better than the CFD financial manager that has dedicated the first six to eight years of his/her career in mastering their basic branch? I would argue, none.

In the February 2011, monthly newsletter of the Financial Management School, leadership declared “FM leaders must be... culturally astute and able to use this awareness and understanding to achieve an intercultural edge.” I find this statement at odds with the deliberate elimination of CFD FM officers who are, by their very nature, the most culturally astute in the branch. While the Army has its own overarching culture which binds all soldiers together, each branch within the Army has its own unique culture and traditions. Culture can be defined as “learned ideals, beliefs, values and assumptions characteristic of an identifiable community or population which cumulatively result in socially transmitted behavior patterns.” If one is submersed within a culture for several years, we become comfortable and able to perceive and interpret the actions of others. The FM community benefits immensely in having CFD CA/CS officers within its ranks. First, FM officers that have served in our combat formations bring credibility to the FM branch by virtue of their war fighting experiences and a well rounded leadership portfolio. They can “walk the walk and talk the talk” - fluently. Secondly, they enrich and diversify the FM ranks with broad experience, which strengthens the entire community via “cross pollination.” Lastly, they diminish the current cultural gap that exists between the operations and FM communities.

CA/CS FMs excel at validating requirements from the field through an operations based resourcing perspective. Their experiences and intimate knowledge of the organic resources and capabilities of their organization allow these comptrollers to offer options and alternatives to the requesting unit of which other financial managers may not be aware. Moreover, these officers are on a sound footing to determine if a given requirement is warranted or not, and articulate exactly why they think so. For example, a RM was walking through a battalion motor pool in Iraq and noticed one Stryker company had an unusual amount of engines in its company area. After conversing with the XO, and drawing from his previous experiences as a commander, realized the servicing Supply Support Activity (SSA) was purposely exceeding their authorized stockage list (ASL) “just in case” rather than adhering to the brigades published maintenance policy. Undisciplined maintenance practices cost Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars in wasted purchasing power at the expense of genuine requirements.



FMs that have commanded CA/CS companies are better equipped to “call out” those who try to game the system, and are generally less likely to be deceived. CFD financial managers have an inherent edge in maximizing unit resources and assisting leaders in making resource informed decisions.

Some have declared branch detailing FM officers mitigates the need for CFD CA/CS officers. I fully support this program for all the same reasons I support reviving the CFD construct. However, the distinctions between an infantry lieutenant and a branch qualified infantry captain in experience, capability and understanding are vast to say the least. The fact of the matter is branch detailing in its current form is a necessity of Army force structure rather than a farsighted initiative to train more capable FM officers. Moreover, branch detailed FM officers will serve as platoon leaders (PL), but are often overlooked for subsequent coveted positions, such as scout or mortar PL regardless of their abilities due to the fact they are “just visiting”. They all too often find themselves in battalion adjutant positions or assistant S4s. While I don’t agree with this practice, it is often a fact of life and a product of human nature.



Others assert CFD officers come too late into the profession and therefore lack the necessary technical skills and proficiency with financial systems. While the initial learning curve is very steep, these motivated financial managers can become functional in a matter of days and proficient in generating reports, running data queries, and conducting detailed analysis in a few short weeks. More often than not, the key to a successful transition is reaching out to fellow comptrollers, as well as the civilians who make up the installation Mission Support Element (MSE) in learning the various systems. In my experience, veteran RMs are more than willing to take a new RM under their wing to teach and mentor on the vital technical aspects of comptrollership.

I am in no way asserting that pure FM officers can’t be good comptrollers. In fact, I have worked with some that are highly competent in the profession. What I am saying is that lengthy exposure in CA/CS career fields enhances the comptrollers’ ability to do their job. There is a benefit to starting a career in the trenches of the operations community and ascending through the ranks that gives the FM officer an appreciation of the complexity and magnitude of the organization they will eventually resource. The FM branch must avoid growing and developing officers whose knowledge is so concentrated that he or she cannot grasp the principles of war fighting operations on which senior leaders demand input. To be useful to the commander, you have to understand how financial statements translate into combat ready organizations.

The immediate challenge for today’s financial manager is to become an active member in the decision making process and to instill a cost culture within their organizations. The CA/CS experienced FM officer possesses the ideal skill sets to meet those challenges. I believe the FM branch would be well served to retain a significant portion of their force structure from the CFD CA/CS branches. By retaining some level of CFD officers balanced with a reduction in second lieutenant accessions, FM leaders will preserve a highly effective blend of FM officers - diverse, highly trained, widely experienced and ready to resource the future challenges of our Army.

- i. US Army Finance School, “Concept Paper for Merging Code 44 (Finance) and Functional Area 45 (Comptroller),” 4.
- ii. Louis Seelig, “Resource Management in Peace and War,” 27.
- iii. *Ibid.*, 27.
- iv. US Army Finance School, February 2011 issue of “The Gryphon,” 1.
- v. LTC Timothy R. Williams, “Culture – We Need Some of That! Cultural Knowledge and Army Officer Professional Development,” 3.
- vi. Louis Seelig, *Resource Management in Peace and War*, xvii.

– RM –



GFEBs - Challenges and Change at the Combatant Command Level: SOUTHCOM

By: COL Angela Larsen and Mr. James Petrone

As a Combatant Command, we knew that we would face plenty of challenges with our General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBs) implementation at the U.S. Southern Command. These challenges include: classified programs, unique types of funding with many special restrictions, funding from other services that would have to be accounted for outside of GFEBs, interagency funding, and lots of cash based transactions. So as we tried to plan the scope and schedule of our GFEBs implementation, there was much debate as to the feasibility of implementing GFEBs at the Headquarters in Miami and at the 24 Security Cooperation Offices (SCO's) during the same wave. This is due to the fact that our SCO's are spread throughout Central/South America and the Caribbean.

ALL IN OR PHASED IMPLEMENTATION?

While bringing all the SCO's on line at the same time would be a huge challenge, we ultimately decided it would be better to have everybody on the same new system rather than trying to deal with our most important customers still on the legacy systems. We already knew that the SCO's would still have to maintain a second system for the Security Assistance funding which flows from the Air Force. In addition, we could gain some synergy from our implementation support team and staff if we were all working through the same problems at the same time, rather than trying to extend the timeline.

A significant amount of time was spent on trying to determine the project or Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) for the commands programs. There were varying opinions on this issue; some promoted the concept of taking our existing account architecture and adapting it into GFEBs, while others wanted to build a new account architecture that was GFEBs-centric. Ultimately, we selected a hybrid architecture that took the legacy structure and incorporated some of the key elements of GFEBs.



This hybrid approach provided a knowledge bridge for the end users to transition from legacy to GFEBs.

One major consideration in developing the account architecture for GFEBs is the reporting requirements for the program or funding in question. Another is the level of control required or desired in managing the flow of funds. Basically, the greater the degree of control desired, requires a proportional level of effort to build and manage this architecture. Since we have so many funding sources with varying needs for reporting, the one size fits all approach was not going to work, especially for programs like Counter Drug which have some very specific mandates by project code.

Like many organizations, we underestimated the cultural change that GFEBs presented, particularly in getting everyone to understand the number of people that would now need to have access to the system. Getting users to finish the required Computer Based Training (CBT) courses, proved to be quite a challenge. While we conducted specialized instructor lead training for the SCO budget officers and assistants, the message that you had to finish your CBT's before you could have access to the system did not translate well for most of our workforce. We overcame this issue through direct out-reach from the Comptroller's Office.

FOREIGN SERVICE NATIONALS (FSN'S)?

This endeavor was further complicated by the fact that the great percentage of our continuity budget force in the SOUTHCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) is comprised of Foreign Service Nationals (FSN's). FSN's are usually foreign nationals hired locally through the Department of State that work in the SCO's. While the impact of GFEBs on our FSN workforce is still under study, we estimate that 34% of our total direct FSN work force with budget or logistical duties has been affected by this systems change and the additional security requirements. This figure does not take into account the impact FSN indirect hires or FSN contractors,



for which we are still trying to obtain data. This presented several challenges for the command and the GFEBs program office that are still under discussion and review by Army G2. These challenges include the following: differences in the Status of Forces Agreements (SOFA's) in each country, the lack of standardized background investigations required for employment, and the lack of a centralized system to easily conduct searches and cross checks. We continue to work with the GFEBs security team to develop standards for FSN employees using the system.

We also discovered that among our program managers at the COCOM level, there were varying degrees of understanding on the actual details of their legacy spending chain transactions. This created great challenges for some of the programs as they tried to map out their legacy transactions and translate them to GFEBs transaction codes. This sometimes led to users taking more training and having roles that were not required. It is incumbent on organizations to map out existing business processes and to analyze them against GFEBs system capabilities and limitations. Once completed, the end users and the GFEBs Support team will be able to determine procedural changes required to ensure successful transaction entry and the flow of funding in achieving organizational objectives.

To assist in this endeavor, the SCO Team targeted five SCO's varying in size and complexity (Argentina, Haiti, Suriname, El Salvador, and Colombia) that were on board early on with GFEBs, and solicited their feedback and assistance for mapping out legacy processes and developing new standardized job aids. We confirmed our suspicions that there were several different processes for each type of transaction the SCO's conducted. For example, when you looked at the way that each country paid for translation services, there could be four or five different methods to pay for the same

service across the region, depending on the local customs, policies, and procedures at each embassy.

Since we rely on State Department (DOS) support for many of our financial transactions, developing a GFEBs crosswalk that would process correctly through the DOS financial system was a priority. DOS uses two systems for input in our AOR: Ariba and Momentum. Since there is no direct interface with GFEBs, the successful processing of DoD lines of accounting (LOA's) most often relies on data entry performed in country by DOS budget personnel. The crosswalks take the DoD LOA's, and break them down in the same format as the DOS financial systems screens, to facilitate data entry and cut down on unmatched transactions received by DFAS from the DOS processing center in Charleston, SC.

Cash disbursing has been another challenge in the GFEBs environment. SOUTHCOM was the pilot command for the use of the U.S. Debit Card in DoD and we have been using this product to facilitate Theater Security Cooperation events and the travel of partner nation participants since 2002. The process and theory to properly account for cash based operations and paying agent accounts, is an area that we are still working through with the GFEBs project team. Due to the number of legacy systems involved in disbursing operations, we eagerly await any modernization and streamlining of the process that future versions of GFEBs may bring to this area of operations.

In spite of the short-term challenges we face, we believe that, in the long run, GFEBs will enhance our visibility and drive a new level of standardization and quality in our financial operations. As a result, we will be able to develop a more accurate picture of the true cost and requirements to support operations in our theater. - RM -

Integrity

By Dr. Wayne Applewhite and a special thank you to Colonel Kathryn Van Der Linden, USAF, MSC, for her edits and collaborative thoughts

We have all heard that word before....

I will not take up your time listing all the favorite quotes or clichés that have ever been written about integrity; if you want those, you can easily find them online or at your local bookstore or library. No, today, I plan to utilize another approach.

Let's take a moment and view integrity from a perspective of what it is not.

Integrity is not about getting things done. It is not about pleasing everyone. It is not about looking good in front of your peers or your bosses. It is not about the perfect presentation. It is not about good news or bad news. It is not about easy, hard or complex. It is neither about the short term nor the long term. It is also not about how well you performed in the last calendar year. And it most certainly is not about the policies, regulations, or the people around you.

"Then what is it about?" you ask? Great question; glad you asked! Integrity is simply about you. That's it. It is that easy and that simple. Integrity is all about you!

When you look in the mirror, are you proud of who looks back at you? When you look deep within yourself, do you like what you see? After you have interacted with someone on the job, can it be said that you were true to your character? True to the person you have professed yourself to be through verbal and nonverbal communication? True for what you stand for?



Dr. Applewhite is a co-founder of the leadership development firm, Just Leadership, LLC., and an Adjunct Professor for Boston University. Please visit his website: www.justleadership.net and his Leadership Blog: <http://wayneap.wordpress.com>. If you have a comment or question, you can also drop him a line: wayne@justleadership.net. – Thank you!

Are your actions consistent? Are your reactions consistent? When others look at you, do they see the same person today they saw six months earlier? Do those who work around you trust you? How do you know they trust you? More importantly, do you care?

Integrity must be the whole person. Restated, integrity must be the "holistic" personal character trait that is unyielding inside of you. It is the underlying foundation of who we are as a person. If the answer to a situation's question is "no," then you offer that no with an appropriate explanation, and never change your answer to "maybe" just because you speak to someone else on the same issue. Most assuredly, if future changes in the same situation present a different picture, then the answer could change to "yes," but for now—all facts remaining constant—"no" is The Right Answer regardless of a change in the message's receiver. Conversely, having accomplished all of your due diligence, if you find the answer to be yes, then one fights for that yes with the same vigor no matter the audience – again, all facts remaining constant.

I suggested that integrity was not about good news or bad news; it is only about the news, good and bad. Likewise, it is about the short-term, medium-term and the long-term mutual benefit. It is about the value you bring to the organization today, not what you might have accomplished over the years. If you have been, and are, consistent, that is what is most important. Policies, regulations and rules can and will change! Those changes come from people with the integrity to say change is required. These people then offer why and how to affect change. Sadly, some have lost their integrity to greed, position, the need for status, and to be Number One. Many of those individuals now find themselves incarcerated, fired,



demoted, ousted from office, and wondering “what happened?,” not to mention where they’re to go from their fallen state. Co-workers are left to speculate where and why those individuals went wrong. My guess? It happened over time. The individuals who put themselves above doing The Right Thing did not perform a “gut-check” when they had the first inclination they were not doing what their inner selves knew to be The Right Thing.

My mom was the best teacher on integrity I ever had, and she offered many examples. No matter how old I became, no matter how many college degrees I earned, and no matter how high I rose in any organization, my mom would chastise me if I did not eat my vegetables. Conversely, she would always find the time to congratulate me when I was successful; it did not matter to her the enormity of the event, the congratulations were always the same; heartfelt. When my path occasionally became difficult, she would raise her head to see if I was still in the “fight,” then check to see whether I stood my ground no matter the outcome. She always told me to do my best, and if someone else’s best was better than mine, then so be it. “Learn from that [experience]” she would say, “and then reenter the ‘fight’ next time with new and supportive information, for or against.”

The values my mother instilled taught me that if the boss did not like my answer, I needed to go back and do more homework. If the answer remained the same, I should give my boss the answer along with more information and intelligence, because that was my job. My job did not include being a “yes man” just to make it easier to deliver a difficult message.

The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary gives these definitions of “integrity”:

- 1: firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values :
INCORRUPTIBILITY
 - 2: an unimpaired condition : SOUNDNESS
 - 3: the quality or state of being complete or undivided :
COMPLETENESS
- synonyms see HONESTY

When one reads these definitions, more questions may arise: what are “morals,” and where were they learned; and, what is meant by “quality?” Those are discussions for another day.

As I look in the mirror, and as I understand my interpretation of the word integrity and its synonym honesty, I perform my own personal gut-check: “Would my mom be proud of the person I see looking back at me?”

– RM –

Managing a Successful Year End Close and Building ‘Confident, Competent, and Capable’ GFEBs Users Along the Way

By: *Tamara (Tami) Henderson TRADOC*

Teamwork and communication continues to be the overarching key elements to a successful year end. To facilitate information sharing of year end processes, requirements, and deadlines, the TRADOC DCS G-8 conducted weekly user-level teleconferences during the month of September which became daily in the final week of yearend close. TRADOC locations were required to have both an Accounting and Budget representative participate in these recurring calls to further promote field-level communication and support discussions across the Resource Management community. Based on comments received, field-sites found these sessions to be very beneficial and have requested that TRADOC start year end teleconferences and planning as early as August. Ultimately, communication between Accounting and Budget is critical for success!

During year end close, the TRADOC DCS G-8 also focused efforts and communications with the field to address GFEBs failed Intermediate Documents (IDOCs), a business practice that also continues throughout the fiscal year. Overall, TRADOC locations continue to do an outstanding job and work extremely hard to maintain low IDOC balances and eliminate aged transactions, moving us closer to our goal of approaching Sep 12 with an absolute minimal/zero balance. This also allows sites more time to focus on other required accounting analysis and requirements at year end to ensure obligations are posted timely.

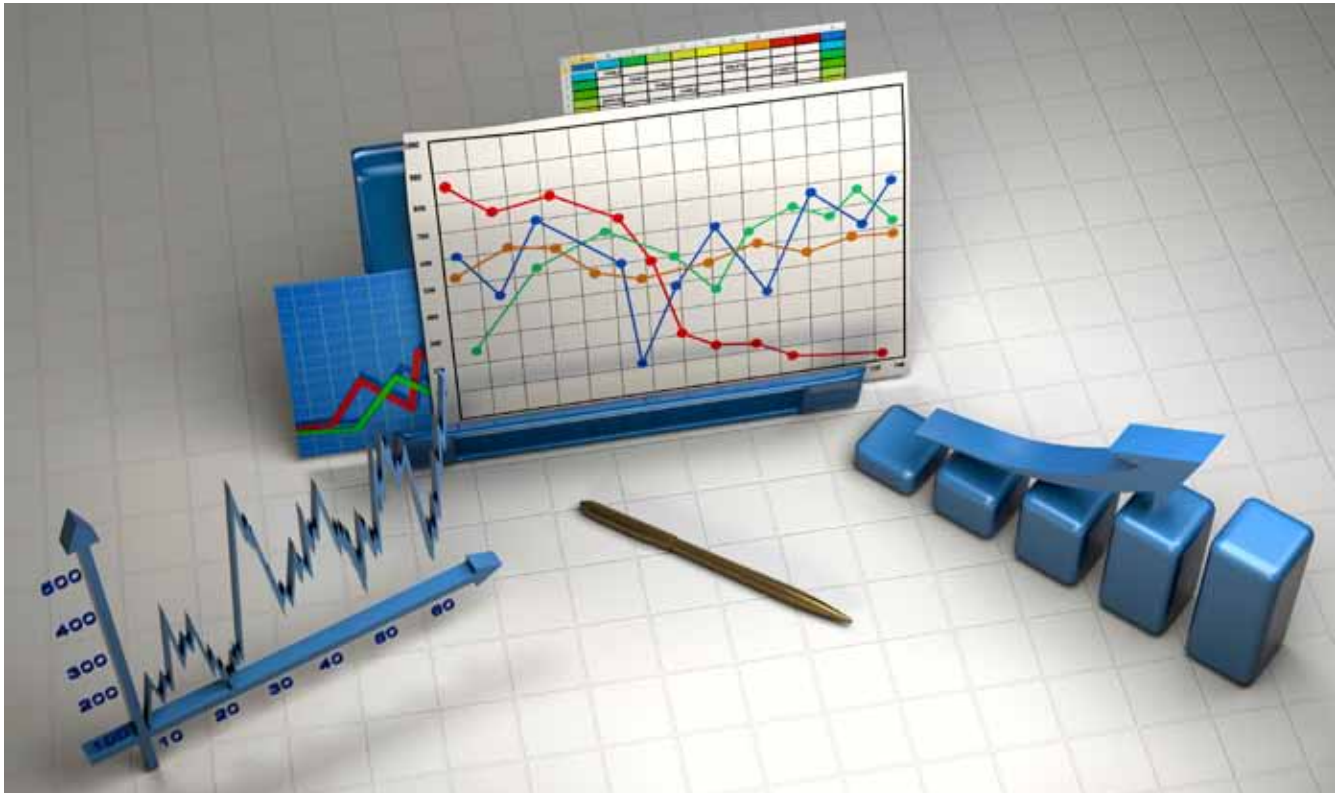
Another critical area is Contracting. Be diligent in managing recurring contracts by planning to award in the July/August timeframe (60-90 days prior to period of performance) to help prevent end-of-year backlogs within the contracting offices. For new or emerging contracts, get required AMO packages in early and pre-position them in GFEBs, subject to availability of funds,

so as to not delay posting. Oh-by-the-way, do not attempt to input a contract at the stroke of midnight on September 30th. By the time the transaction is completed the system will have likely rolled over to the next fiscal year and that is where the contract will post! Additionally, maintain close communication and coordination with contracting offices throughout and ensure that PR/PO/SPS input is accurate and consistent – this is critical. The TRADOC Budget community accomplished this by utilizing a tracking tool to monitor all purchase requests submitted to contracting via GFEBs. A spreadsheet was populated to identify the PO number, dollar amount, requirement, date transmitted to GFEBs, and the budget POC for the requirement and was sent to the appropriate contracting POC on a weekly basis. The contracting POC would in turn update with status of the PO and the award and highlight in red abnormalities. This tool, now being utilized by many TRADOC sites throughout the year, quickly identified a PO that was submitted but did not make it to contracting, and facilitated the tracking of obligations once the award was made.

Reconciling and certifying to the GFEBs General Ledger Trial Balance was a new concept at the ACOM level for FY 11 and was immensely challenging going into year end. As a result, TRADOC requested that the way ahead include more in-depth training for the financial management community to bridge this knowledge gap and be able to meet the expectations of higher headquarters. For the most part, Trial Balance reconciliation requirements are now being taught as part of the GFEBs JRP training with the goal of educating users on how to drill down into the Reconciliation Report to the actual transactions causing differences or out of balance conditions. TRADOC DCS G-8 personnel have attended this training and will include JRP/Trial Balance training into scheduled proficiency-refresher training for delivery to the majority of TRADOCs SME and Power User community.

Although progress is being made, collectively more work needs to be done in establishing timely feeder system cutoff dates/times and ensuring cutoffs occur as scheduled. These and other requirements and lessons learned are captured after year end and communicated with appropriate organizations for future planning and decision-making.

The GFEBs Hotline was very helpful again this year by allowing users to dial in to a centralized SME helpdesk to receive on-the-spot support and answers to questions. There were times when reach-back was needed, but the GFEBs SMEs quickly got the information and called back to provide assistance. Additionally, frequent updates to Status of Funds reports and Fund Center account balances were a big plus compared to legacy updates which



assisted users in closing out accounts on schedule with minimal errors.

Although year end is typically challenging in and of itself, as well as currently requiring closing out two financial systems simultaneously, we have seen steady and continued improvement with GFEBS functionality and reporting each year since our initial deployments began in Wave 1. Overall, our users' working-knowledge of the system continues to increase while the system continues to mature over time. Due in large part to the success of the TRADOC GFEBS Mentor Program, as well as extensive training workshops and communications, we continue toward our goal of solidifying the foundation for our locations to become more confident, competent, and capable GFEBS users. Overall, our commitment, dedication, communications, and teamwork promote the ability of TRADOC to become a self-sustaining organization and successfully overcome any challenges we may encounter throughout the Fiscal Year within the GFEBS environment.

About the Author: Tamara (Tami) Henderson is Chief, ERP Integration and Fiscal Law Division Finance and Accounting Directorate, Office of The Deputy Chief of Staff, G-8, HQs, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

Enterprise Central Component (ECC)/Business Intelligence (BI) reporting. And we need more training in resolving IDOC errors, preventing/troubleshooting Defense Travel System (DTS) UMDs/UMCs, and advanced BI reporting. We are looking forward to GFEBS refresher training later this year to reinforce those areas where we still have some weaknesses.

USMA is looking forward to assisting our customers transform from a budget culture to a cost culture – thus enabling management to make cost informed decisions. With projected budget cuts of \$450 billion over the next ten years, it's only a matter of time until GFEBS shows its true capabilities.

We understand GFEBS is a living system, changing and evolving and eventually STANFINS will become a distant memory – “you know in the old days when we used that other system.”

As we move forward, we anticipate learning more, becoming proficient about GFEBS functionality and expect it will take years to fully leverage GFEBS' capabilities. We have fully embraced GFEBS and its assorted challenges. They tell us our prognosis is good and we will survive. - RM -

GFEBs Integration with Global Combat Support System-Army (GCSS-Army)

By Darlene Gibson TRADOC

Work is continuing towards the deployment of the Army's new logistics system/ERP solution -- the Global Combat Support System-Army (GCSS-Army). GCSS-Army is an SAP product that will look and function similar to the General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBs) and will be a fully integrated, web-based, logistics/financial information system. Deployment is scheduled to take place in two waves, with Wave 1 commencing in the 1st quarter of FY 13 and completing by the 1st quarter of FY 15. A final deployment schedule has not yet been released.

Command representatives from both G-8 and G-4 have been participating in GCSS-Army workshops to identify financial, logistics, and conversion requirements. The GCSS-Army team is currently preparing to demonstrate identified requirements that are

already included in the GCSS-Army solution. The team is also working to develop those requirements that were not part of the original SAP programming.

GCSS-Army will be converting all open supply documents at the time of conversion. Resource Management Offices should currently be performing a review of all open documents to ensure they are valid for conversion. The RM community will be heavily involved in the data cleansing effort as we will have to ensure that SARSS/FCM/STANFINS/GFEBs records match for all converting documents. The GCSS-Army team is developing a tool that the RM and Logistics communities will utilize to work through the data cleansing effort.

More information on GCSS-Army can be found at the GCSS-Army website (<https://www.gcass.army.mil/>). Go to the Overview tab and the Education tab to take advantage of the information provided.

About the Author:

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USMA - Experience with GFEBS at D+1 Year

By Lisa DeGrave



It is hard to believe it has been one year and three months ago when General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBS) became a reality at the United States Military Academy (USMA). We joked about the valley of despair, for us it was more catatonia and as the months wore on and short bursts of consciousness broke through we began to speak the GFEBS lingo - Cost Centers, BI, ECC, WBSs, milWiki, and Sales Orders.

The first year of GFEBS was merely a blur. During initial deployment, the most common Onsite Support answer to any question was, "Have you checked your Job Aide?" We pushed buttons, printed Job Aides, killed trees, ran T-codes, went through the motions to push funding, obligate, or prepare an SPS-PR. Successes were small, but we began to celebrate any small victory.

We would cheer and high-five one another when we processed a single transaction without an error – or what we thought was a transaction without an error. Fast forward three months later and then the Intermediate Document (IDOC) errors and Unmatched Disbursements (UMD) lists started to arrive. We realized we were less successful than we thought. Ultimately, we managed to pick ourselves up off the floor, determined to learn to spell I-D-O-C.

A year later and a year-end close behind us, we have now drunk (sipped) the Kool-Aid and are GFEBS believers – kind of. We had some opportunities to continue to run some of our business processes in Legacy and chose not to. The only thing we are still running in Legacy is receipt of Gift Fund FADs and closing out Legacy transactions. I do not believe we have begun to tap the full potential of GFEBS but the amount of information and detail available to our customers on how they are spending money outpaces anything we could have produced in Legacy.

One of the greatest challenges has been changing business processes and capturing those into Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs). Benefits of GFEBS include enabling us to have real time reporting, transparency, and drill-down capability.

We have become proficient at funds distribution, creating WBS elements, processing non-DTS travel within GFEBS, and basic Enterprise Central Component (ECC)/Business Intelligence (BI) reporting. And we need more training in resolving IDOC errors, preventing/troubleshooting Defense Travel System (DTS) UMDs/UMCs, and advanced BI reporting. We are looking forward to GFEBS refresher training later this year to reinforce those areas where we still have some weaknesses.

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USAR – Lessons Learned on Implementing GFEBs

By Patrick Wozniak

The Army Reserve has fully deployed GFEBs to its Headquarters, Regional Support Commands and Operational and Functional Commands during waves 4, 5 and 7 with approximately 1,700 provisioned end users. During the initial stages of implementation, leadership was engaged in the change management process which helped to prepare our end users for the transition from legacy systems to GFEBs. This involvement from the top of the organization was extremely beneficial because it also helped in the reduction of resistance from the new end users to the new Enterprise Resource Planning system.

...with the hard work of our soldiers and civilians, the USAR views the transition as a success.

The Army Reserve worked to communicate lessons learned between commands via formal and informal communication. The main challenge we faced was sharing lessons learned with our geographically dispersed users, located CONUS and OCONUS. Regular communication coupled with remote and onsite support, when possible, was crucial to the success of this large-scale transition.

In the early weeks of each wave, we experienced many of the same challenges involved in users adjusting to the changes in software and processes. Many incidents of frustration due to slowdowns in work being performed were reported, but over time, as users became acclimated to using the new system, many of these complaints have declined significantly.

Over time processes have changed, many for the better, to enable the USAR to have better information for day to day decision making as well as strategic future planning. There have been challenges involved in the Army Reserve's transition from the legacy environment to the GFEBs environment, but with the hard work of our soldiers and civilians, the USAR views the transition as a success. – RM –



The Innovative Edge

By Dr. Wayne Applewhite

Warning! “Stop Sign Ahead” Ever wondered what happened?



There you were a rising star! You were on easy street cruising along. Everyone respected you and everyone could count on you; you could do no wrong...but you did, and you thought no one knew.

As we build our professional networks inside and outside of our organizations, sometimes we don't realize the interconnectedness of those networks. It is rather ironic at times, how those relationships we form have a funny way of coming full circle. Many have wondered how the “boss” found out about that little ‘tale’ you told or the project that you took credit for when it was not yours for the taking. Some have wondered why [it seemed] relationships had changed or no longer existed. Some still have no clue.

Communication suggests transparency.

What are you saying/doing that brings you to the intersection of Truth and Honesty? Who else is at that corner, watching... listening...talking?

Until the next time; Lead on!

Dr. Applewhite is co-founder of the leadership development firm, Just Leadership, LLC, and an Adjunct Professor for Boston University. Please visit his website: www.justleadership.net. If you have a comment or question, you can also drop him a line: wayne@justleadership.net. – Thank you for reading!

Army Career Tracker now available to 1/3 of Civilians



Army Civilian Training and Leader Development Division, Army
G-3/5/7

Employees in seven more Civilian Career Programs now have access to Army Career Tracker (ACT), the Army's first comprehensive leader development and career management tool that integrates training, assignment history, education and experiential learning into one personalized, user-friendly online interface for all Army personnel.

First implemented for enlisted Soldiers, ACT expanded to Officers and Army Civilians in the fall. Thirteen of the Army's 31 Civilian Career Programs (CPs) -- comprising about one-third of the Army's Civilian Workforce -- now have access: CP 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 22, 24, 27, 29, 31, 32 and 34. The next Civilian Career Programs set to spiral into ACT at the end of March are CP 14, 16, 20, 26 and 33. All Career Programs - in addition to all enlisted and officer career management fields (of all active and Reserve components) - are scheduled to be in ACT by the end of the fiscal year.

continued on pg. 21



The Army's leadership wants to ensure all members of the professional Army Civilian Corps have a deliberate career path to follow, Under Secretary of the Army Dr. Joseph W. Westphal said during the 2011 AUSA Annual Meeting, adding that "employees will be able to receive education, training and development in those career paths so they can grow in the Army and provide greater expertise in their jobs." ACT also aligns Civilian training and career development with the goals of Army Learning Concept 2015 and supports Civilian Workforce Transformation initiatives.

"The Army Career Tracker empowers Army Civilians to effectively take ownership of their professional career and leader development," said Vicki Brown, Chief of Civilian Training and Leader Development, Army G-37. "One of our goals is to ensure all Army Civilians know the tools available to help them chart their course and have the opportunity to participate in professional development to help them achieve their career goals and support their organizational mission."

ACT - online at <https://actnow.army.mil> - allows users to:

- View career related data in one online portal;
- Examine career maps (personalized professional development models for their career plan);
- Receive recommendations from leaders, mentors, supervisors and Career Program managers;
- Identify the operational/functional, institutional and leader development requirements;
- Complete and Individual Development Plan (IDP); and
- Plan new activities designed to reach professional and personal goals.

A great tool for young careerists, ACT offers a much more visible roadmap to help them decide where they want to go and what they have to do to reach the highest levels in their career fields so they can start planning early, according to Brown

Employees are encouraged to access ACT at least monthly to communicate with their leaders, supervisors and mentors about career development goals and obtain the latest news and information tailored to their career program and individual needs. Users are also expected to use ACT to create and track their personal and professional career development goals. Users can search multiple

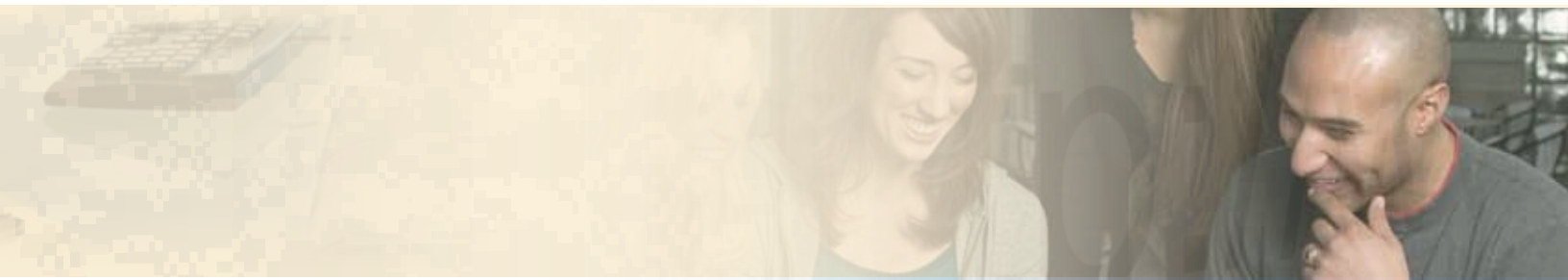
education and training resources, monitor their career development and receive personalized advice from their leaders.

The system allows Civilian and military supervisors and mentors to monitor their employees' goals and provide them developmental recommendations, notifications and career advice. Supervisors will be able to view records for both their Civilian and military employees. In addition, those Civilians who are also part-time in uniform are able to view both their military and civilian records through this one portal.

Part of the 2011 Army Campaign Plan, Army Learning Concept 2015 (ALC 2015) and the Civilian Workforce Transformation Initiatives, Army Career Tracker is managed by the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). The system leverages existing Army systems to capture and present career management data; it does not replace or eliminate current systems and programs. The Army G3/5/7 Training Directorate's Civilian Training and Leader Development Division, in conjunction with TRADOC, are leading the ACT Civilian implementation.

The rest of the Civilian CPs will spiral into ACT in two phases: early July and late September. When ACT is fully implemented by the end of the year it will service some 1.4 million users. Visit the ACT website, <https://actnow.army.mil>, for additional information.





What We've Got Here Is Failure to Communicate



By COL Jeffrey Powell

“What we’ve got here is failure to communicate”. While this famous quote came from the movie *Cool Hand Luke*, it could just as easily have been uttered at the conclusion of many of the briefings presented by action officers to Army Senior Leaders. For the past 18 months I have had the pleasure of serving as the Chief of Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution for the Director of the Army Budget. Part of my duties in this position is to co-chair the Colonels Budget, Requirements, and Programming Board (BRP) and the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting Committee Council of Colonels. During this time I have seen hundreds, if not thousands, of briefings. If you were to ask me what is the number one lesson I have learned from all of these briefings, my answer would be immediate: As a community, we are less than successful in effectively communicating our intended message. It is all too common for excellent analysis and staff work to be marginalized due to poor communication. The purpose of this article is to change that situation and enable effective communication. With that goal in mind, I submit five suggestions for your consideration.

First, know what success looks like. Before you begin to build your briefing, ask yourself - what is my desired end-state? What is the goal of my briefing? Is your goal to obtain a decision? If so, what decision? Are you providing information for the audience’s situational awareness? If so, what are the key points you want your audience to remember a week later? Once you have answered these questions, limit your briefing to no more than three to five key points. I know that this seems like a blinding flash of the obvious, but you would be amazed at the number of briefings I have seen end with both the briefer and the audience asking themselves “What was the purpose of that briefing?”

Second, tell the audience the purpose of the briefing. This should be the first thing you do after introducing yourself. This will help your audience focus on your intended message. Your briefing should conclude with a restatement of your purpose statement.

Third, know the difference between data and information. Many financial managers have developed strong backgrounds in accounting

and statistical analysis. The majority of Army Senior leaders do not have this background, thus a simple piece of advice - Drop the spreadsheet and walk away! I frequently see briefers hand out complex spreadsheets which have taken hundreds of hours to develop expecting instant comprehension from their audience. This NEVER ends well. When presented with complex spreadsheets or visual aids, audiences almost always begin asking off topic questions concerning the form and content of the spreadsheet and the briefer’s intended message (and the audience) is lost. Any chart or visual aid you use during a briefing should send a clear unambiguous message to the audience. If your goal is to prove you are the smartest person in the room, presenting reams of meticulously compiled data may be effective, but when seeking a senior leader decision, keep it clear and simple. If you must explain why a visual aid is apropos to your briefing you have failed. When in doubt, ask a co-worker who is unfamiliar with your project to critique your briefing. If Napoleon’s ego would allow him to take constructive criticism from a corporal, yours should also.

Fourth, know your audience. This is important for two reasons: First, individual Army communities speak unique languages. When I discuss a “SAG” with the Director of the Army Budget he understands I am referencing an appropriation Sub-activity Group. When I mention SAG to Brad Pitt, he hears “Screen Actors Guild”. For this reason it is important to know your audience to ensure you are speaking the correct language. Second, you must tailor your message to the intended audience. Some audiences will revel in the infinite details of how a watch was built; other audiences will simply want to know the current time.

Lastly, once you have achieved your objective, stop talking. I do not remember a single instance during my 25 year military career when a senior leader said “Wow, do I wish that meeting had lasted longer!” There are two likely outcomes when you continue talking after achieving your objective: One, the decision you sought will be reversed; or two, you will have confused your message and irritated your audience. The five suggestions above were formulated based on both my personal observations and witnessed reactions of Army Senior Leadership during hundreds of briefings. While communicating the goal, the purpose, and the information to the audience and knowing when to stop talking, may not instantly transform you into the world’s most accomplished orator; it will increase your ability to effectively communicate information in support of senior leader decisions.

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I am an Army Civilian a member of the Army Team

I am dedicated to our Army, our Soldiers and Civilians

I will always support the mission

I provide stability and continuity during war and peace

I support and defend the Constitution of the United States and consider it an honor to serve our Nation and our Army

I live the Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage

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