

October Communications Exchange Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2007

Attendees

Roger Bowling, Dept. of Aviation
Paul Casalaspì, The Library of Virginia
Prin Cowan, Motor Vehicle Dealer Board
Kevin Cronin, Dept. of Taxation
Fred Duball, VITA
Theresa Duncan, Dept. of Fire Programs
Leonard Eshmont, VA Dept. For the Aging
Bob Farley, Dept. of the Treasury
Jan Fatouros, Dept. of General Services
Joe Fay, Northrop Grumman
Ron Giddings, Dept. of Motor Vehicles
Craig Goeller, Dept. of Medical Assist. Svcs.
Robert Hobbelman, Dept. of Social Services
Jenny Hunter, VITA
Rob Jenkins, Dept. of Juvenile Justice
Jim Keck, VA Dept. of Emergency Mgmt.
Mark Monson, Dept. of Health Professions
Bob Moore, Dept. of Alcoholic Bev. Control

Courtney Mustin, Dept. of Minority Business Enterprise
Judy Napier, Secretary of Technology
Rick Phillips, Dept. of Accounts
Bill Price, Dept. of Conserv. & Recreation
Todd Richardson, Dept. of Mines, Minerals and Energy
Jim Roberts, Dept. of Rehabilitative Services
Dick Salkead, Dept. of Accounts
Debbie Secor, VITA
David Simmons, Dept. of Veterans Services
Lem Stewart, VITA
Pam Taver, VA Dept. of Transportation
Johnny Thomas, VA Employment Commissn.
Dennis West, VA Racing Commission
Al Williams, Dept. of Housing & Community Development

Phone lines used: 23

VITA Status Update

Lem Stewart presented the deck he plans to deliver to House Appropriations Committee on Oct. 15. The deck is available online at <http://www.vita.virginia.gov/uploadedFiles/Library/presentations/2007/071015VITAStatusReport.pdf>

Highlights of his presentation include:

- VITA is responsible for more than computers and phones, including IT investment management, E 9-1-1 services support, statewide geographic information systems (GIS), security policies and standards and infrastructure services to more than 900 customers.
- Prior to the formation of VITA in 2003, the Commonwealth had inadequate IT expenditure management, aging and inefficient IT infrastructure and support functions, thousands of software license violations, inadequate security, and data center rated a risk. Many of these issues have been resolved or will be resolved with transformation.
- The portfolio of transformation projects is “jump-starting” \$270 million of investments into the Commonwealth through the public-private partnership with Northrop Grumman.
- The Commonwealth Enterprise Solutions Center (CESC) was completed in June 2007 to house the primary data center. The Southwest Enterprise Solutions Center

(SWESC) is on target for completion Nov. 1 and creates more than 430 new jobs in rural southwest Virginia.

- According to the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO), the top challenges facing consolidation initiatives are workforce resistance to change and agencies wishes to remain autonomous.
- The partnership has encountered challenges with fulfilling service requests. Progress has been made, and more work is needed. For September, 93 percent of standard items were delivered within 14 days.
- While the “cap” on partnership spending has not changed, agencies may be experiencing variations in costs due to the new federal cost allocation mandate, VITA’s transition to a fee-for-service agency, General Fund programs transitioned to fee-for-service and historical practices of under-funding IT programs.
- Correcting these irregularities cost an additional \$10 million annually.
- VITA’s indirect costs (overhead) has gone down steadily, from a high of 17.1 percent in FY04 to a low of 9.5 percent in FY07. The industry benchmark is 10 percent or lower.
- Significant progress has been made over the first 15 months to modernize and correct deficiencies in Virginia’s infrastructure.
- Commitment, cooperation and collaboration is required for success. It is not surprising that there’s resistance to change or the costs of doing business the right way. There will be bumps in the road, and VITA will address issues as quickly as it can.

Bob Moore asked about the potential announcement of a cost cut. Mr. Stewart said VITA is looking at about \$1.2 million in potential savings and is still working on the details.

Working Together and Future Meetings

Lem Stewart asked everyone to look at potential meeting topics that have wide-ranging impacts on our organizations. He suggested disaster recovery (DR) as a potential topic, estimating it is a \$40 to \$50 million problem across Commonwealth agencies. He recommended helping one another and joining together with a single proposal to take to the Governor and General Assembly to have a stronger voice than agencies going one by one.

Mr. Stewart asked whether a working group should develop the agenda for future meetings or if the participants should be polled in advance for topics of interest.

Bill Price said he spreads himself thin with working groups and voiced support for polling participants on topics of interest.

Jan Fatouros said she wanted to see some focus on figuring out the best way to ensure that business imperatives within the agencies are fully understood by customer-facing staff and Northrop Grumman. She believes that’s where a lot of frustration and misunderstanding comes from. Technical people don’t understand the business, and have day-to-day operations and transformation activities to keep moving forward. She said the person who represents and understands best DGS’ business and issues is the Service Level Director (SLD), who lives and breathes the environment daily. She recommended leveraging the

SLD role and improving communications. Mr. Stewart said delivery education and support is critical, especially moving to a shared support, shared services model.

Mr. Moore said VITA has done a lot of work to establish service level agreements (SLAs). He suggested a coordinated review of metrics on a regular basis.

Jim Roberts said the Dept. of Rehabilitative Services environment is complex, with more than 70 locations around the state. He said he thinks there's a potential conflict in the way VITA approaches initiatives, such as the mobile workforce. His agency is encountering issues around laptops and PDAs and with field reps. Mr. Stewart suggested inviting Karen Jackson, Office of Telework Promotion and Broadband Assistance, to meet with the group and discuss business implications.

Rob Jenkins questioned the cost difference between laptops and desktops, noting the prices for laptops have decreased and support services are about the same. Desktop transformation is nearly 90 percent complete at DJJ. He said his agency is interested in the server consolidation and move, requesting a high-level discussion of architecture and approach. He also noted the Commonwealth awarded an electronic document content management contract to IBM that may support a cross-Commonwealth solution to address e-mail and the issues discussed in the August meeting.

Fred Duball said the server approach is not simple, one-size-fits-all. The server team will meet with agencies individually to discuss first the consolidation and then the relocation. Mr. Jenkins said the broader aspect of architecture and approach up front will be helpful, as the effort will require internal resources. Mr. Duball said VITA and Northrop Grumman met with The Library of Virginia to discuss records retention and e-mail from a Commonwealth perspective. A workgroup is looking at options and solutions. Mr. Jenkins said he was a participant. He liked the more elegant solution because there is less potential for human error than with the more manual approaches.

Craig Goeller said he agreed with Jan's comments about understanding business needs. Between the SLDs and Customer Account Managers (CAMs), VITA should have a better feel and understanding. He suggested more frequent meetings. He is also concerned about DR. Dept. of Medical Assistance Services is in the process of testing their continuity of operations plan (COOP). He said it worries him to think about where DMAS would go to recover an agency of 400 or 500 people.

Ron Giddings said the DMV SLD is doing the best job they can, but can get slammed with paperwork and lose customer focus. The business knowledge is there but could be stronger. He expressed concerns about surplus equipment sitting in hallways for long periods of time and causing problems with business/fire codes. Mr. Stewart said part of the problem is that the state warehouse is full, with overflow at Alcoholic Beverage Control.

Kevin Cronin thanked VITA and Northrop Grumman for a flawless move of Taxation servers from the old data center to the new data center over the weekend. Staffing levels for current operations is a concern. He said it's essential to define and document SLAs so there is performance data available. He expressed concerns about losing critical engineers and IT staff who may feel overworked. He asked for more openness about project timelines for transformation projects and a little more foresight of what's coming down the pipeline.

The group discussed SLAs and whether they were available. Mr. Duball said central operations and field metrics are collected today. VITA and Northrop Grumman should be managing to the levels the agencies set previously. If there were reports before, there

should be reports now. After transformation is complete, the partnership will have tools and reporting across the enterprise and at the agency level. That view does not yet exist. Mr. Stewart said the topic needs to be revisited by customer-facing staff and SLDs to determine the status of existing SLAs and see what next steps are.

Jim Keck asked what happens if the service levels are not met. Is there accountability? Mr. Duball said VITA and Northrop Grumman should have action plans to make the levels better. The data can also be used to prevent similar problems from re-occurring

Mr. Jenkins said his agency is seeing more service delivery redundancy, with network staff from other agencies coming on site to help backfill. He said he would like to see that redundancy on the server side. Mr. Cronin said Taxation is not part of the conversation about centralization and regionalization. His agency is in two regions with their buildings so dispersed. He hears that staff alignment is a Northrop Grumman internal issue. Mr Stewart said some aspects of staffing aren't entirely known yet, but regular education and interaction is important. He suggested some group education and discussion. Mr. Fay said that would be an excellent topic for this group. He said staffing is not an internal matter, as it needs to support agency business imperatives and requires agency input and validation. Mr. Duball said the centrally managed operations center (CMOC) will monitor devices that have not been monitored before.

Dennis West said he is director of operations at Virginia Racing Commission, a small agency with seven staff and no IT staff. He is both the agency IT resource (AITR) and information security officer (ISO). Many of the issues and discussions in this meeting are over his head. With transformation projects and operations, it can be overwhelming and the agency is not sure where to go for resources and assistance. Mr. Stewart asked if he was part of the Small Agency Council. Mr. West said he is a member but had not attended the last meetings because of travel. He will attend the next meeting.

Rick Phillips agreed that soliciting topics is the best way to establish the meeting agenda. He said Dept. of Accounts has had some issues and lack of business understanding. DOA has a new SLD and relatively new operational staff. He said the CAMs don't understand the business and they feel as though nobody really understands their business in the transformation arena. A great deal of planning is going on and they do not have visibility.

Mr. Secor said she would ask the CAMs to work with the transformational planning teams to make sure we have a good overview of what's coming, and to get back with agency staff. She asked for agency assistance to help VITA understand if plans fall into the right timeframes for their business. Agency Performance Managers (APMs) have been involved in the details and have their agencies' businesses in mind when they meet with agencies.

Mr. Stewart said he was intrigued by the question of understanding the business with the challenge of people moving and pending retirements of baby boomers. He noted that it takes a 2- or 3-day work session to orient a new member to the IT Investment Board to get them up to speed on what VITA does, what the critical issues are and what they as ITIB members do. He asked the group whether they have employee orientation programs.

Mark Monson suggested talking with Dept. of Planning and Budget. When he was an analyst there, part of his job was to learn the business of his agencies. He said he has great confidence that his analyst knows his business. When analysts change, he has confidence that the new analyst will get a good handle on the business in a relatively short timeframe. In response to a question from Mr. Stewart, Mr. Monson said Dept. of Health

Professions does not have a formal training program for their DPB analysts. They talk with them, and they actively listen. He said DPB makes it their business to know our business.

Roger Bowling said his comments echo those of Dennis West. As an employee of a small agency, he said he is regularly reaching for his IT translation dictionary.

Johnny Thomas said there are gaps in communications, but VITA and Northrop Grumman staff back each other up. He said he feels they know Virginia Employment Commission's business and have taken roles in budget decisions and have helped find solutions. He praised his CAM, Linda Smithson. He would like to discuss DR and security. With VEC going to a self-service model, data becomes even more critical. VEC wants to partner with VITA to get the money to build a formal DR plan and system. Most people at VEC don't know the difference between SLD and CAM—get good service from both.

Prin Cowan said the Motor Vehicle Dealer Board is a small agency that will begin desktop transformation in November. She echoed the sentiments of her small agency counterparts and requested assistance with applications and preparation for transformation. She said nearly half of the MVDB workforce telework, and the agency struggled with deciding on which equipment and options would be best (laptop vs. tablet, encryption, VPN, etc.). In response to a question from Ms. Secor, the group of small agencies present said this would be a good topic for the Small Agency Council. Todd Richardson said VITA is missing the boat on implementing a solution for teleworking. Dept. of Mines, Minerals and Energy has a huge percentage of laptops, probably 50 percent.

Robert Hobbelman said locally-owned machines is a big topic for Dept. of Social Services. Ms. Secor said VITA has a meeting with DSS executive staff scheduled and the approach document is nearly finalized. Mr. Roberts said DRS has many out-of-scope machines. Ms. Secor said she would discuss offline with Mr. Roberts. DSS is more complex with more than 4,000 local machines.

Theresa Duncan said she spent 30 years with local government and has been with the state for more than a year. She said she feels like she should know more as an AITR, and asked the group to share best practices. She expressed interest in COOP exercises, how to remediate security findings, and lessons learned from transformation.

Al Williams agreed it was a good idea to develop topics and canvass AITRs. He supported potential rate adjustments, saying "selling" the monthly IT bill to business units is difficult. Dept. of Housing and Community Development is about 25 percent refreshed. The process is going well overall, and should be finished in early December. He cited Northrop Grumman staff for providing details and support to make the decision to go forward with refresh. He said he is interested in the DR and other future-facing topics and programs.

Pam Taver recommended three categories of agenda items. First, she recommended a transformation progress update that is not too high-level (5,000 foot view vs. 30,000 foot view) and incorporates agencies sharing their experiences and schedule for who's getting what next. The second category is burning issues where subject matter experts from VITA or Northrop Grumman could lead discussions, such as procurement and request for services (RFS). Future meetings would include progress updates on each burning issue. The third category is emerging business needs, such as DR, service levels in business areas and IT, records retention and e-mail. The Commonwealth often needs interim solutions, as enterprise solutions take a long time to roll out. She noted that it is time-consuming to work together and coordinate across four organizations: the customer agency, VITA, Northrop Grumman corporate and Northrop Grumman local.

Paul Casalaspì said service levels are of great interest to The Library of Virginia, and would like to have numbers to give his Board that meets regularly. He is interested in Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) in terms of costs, timelines and schedule, as well as server transformation, consolidation and virtualization. E-mail and records retention is a significant challenge. The Library has authority to come up with policies, but no authority to enforce and no money to ensure compliance. He agreed that forming a proposal to take to the General Assembly may help. Mr. Stewart said he knows people are overloaded with many working groups, but they can be effective. He asked that business owners or those at the forefront of an issue or solution to bring business solutions forward as topics. If it is applicable to enough organizations, it may be more effective as a single IT initiative, rather than individual agencies taking it forward piecemeal.

Mr. Casalaspì said another issue is around budget requests and taking that off the table each year. He thanked the staff performing network migration and offered an e-records management expert to present at a future meeting, after the first of the year.

Dave Simmons thanked VITA for helping Dept. of Veterans Services support a spread-out organization. He asked how VITA and Northrop Grumman can take ownership of problems, citing field calls and a firewall issue. He is hearing "tell me what you need me to do" from service delivery staff when he expects them to diagnose and resolve problems. He requested visibility into help desk tickets and support managing a distributed environment. Mr. Stewart encouraged him to let VITA know what's going on and where the gaps are.

The group discussed the availability of help desk ticket information. Agencies that have migrated to Peregrine can access help desk tickets. Ms. Secor will provide information about how to get tickets.

Mr. Simmons said he thought an inventory system would be helpful. VITA staff is coming to him to ask where a piece of equipment is. Mr. Stewart said VITA should know the answer, but we did not have the data, so we asked. Mr. Simmons said that now that DVS is getting billed per widget, he wants to see the inventory as the bill breakdown doesn't include location. Mr. Stewart said VITA's billing system is being re-done and that the inventory and reconciliation process is beginning.

Leonard Eshmont said Dept for the Aging is supported by shared operations staff. Turnover has been high, and backups come in with little operations information, such as what the DNS and admin password is. He expressed concerns about timeliness of the RFS process.

Bob Farley suggested organizing transformation by section and division to accommodate different peak times within an agency.

Mr. Stewart thanked everyone for their participation. The meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.