



NEWSLETTER

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At last, the build phase of ROSS is drawing to completion! And we are getting closer to implementation every day! It's still too early to lock in specific dates for everything, but what follows is a preliminary schedule to close out the build phase of the ROSS application.

- Oct 2-20: ROSS Build and Application Documentation Reviews
- Oct 16-18: Joint Review of Build Phase Contract Deliverables
- Oct 23: All ROSS Application components delivered to Government by the contractor
- Oct 28: First major test of ROSS Application using NITC servers conducted by the ROSS Team
- Oct 30: Deliverable acceptance date
- Dec 11-15: ROSS Team meeting with National Coordinators
- Jan 8-12: ROSS Partners' Meeting

Implementation is not one particular event. Rather it is a process of relaying information from the developers to the users. This does not happen overnight, or on any particular day like turning on a switch. It's a process that encompasses testing, training, startup, ongoing support, evaluation, etc. The team estimates the first geographic areas should begin testing the application during the winter of 2001.

Planit-ROSS

No, it's not a typo, but the theme of the next ROSS Partners' meeting to be held in Phoenix, AZ. Beginning January 8th, ROSS Partners will have the opportunity to work through various scenarios, test the application and become more familiar with it. Partners will be using the extensive computer facilities at the BLM National Training Center to accomplish these tasks.

What is change management and what does it mean for ROSS?

By Jon Skeels, ROSS Project Manager

Projects such as ROSS and DMS have a Charter which documents the agreed upon scope, objectives, timeframes and deliverables, by the project sponsors and stakeholders. The scope defines the project boundaries. The objectives are defined within the project scope. The timeframe is usually a high-level schedule that documents forecasted project milestone dates. The deliverables, which are noted as a deliverable listing, provides a planned list of the items that the project is expected to produce.

As a project progresses through its various phases, new ideas and requirement changes often surface which lead to potential enhancements or "added value" to the product. To manage these ideas and changes, a "change management process" is established which provides for documentation, requirements definition, cost estimating, staffing estimation, and approval of new ideas and changes. *The process is used for anything affecting the scope, objectives, requirements, deliverables, or financing of the project.* Change management also applies to all contract related work on the project. *It is critical to manage change, as acceptance of new ideas and changes without proper management can lead to schedule delays, higher costs, and staffing issues.*

What changes are currently logged into the ROSS Change Management Process? There are many items being considered for incorporation into ROSS. Prioritization and funding of these items will be finalized in October. Many items will be added as a result of reviews and field-testing that begins that same month. The list below is a sample of change management items being considered.

- Design, develop, integrate, test, and deploy a web interface for authorized contractors and overhead personnel to modify resource status, availability and location.
- Design, develop, integrate, test and deploy a user interface that permits the setting, analysis, display and reporting of resource draw down levels¹ within the ROSS application.
- Design, develop, integrate, test and deploy a user interface that permits the setting, analysis, display and report of incident priorities within the ROSS application.
- Design, develop, integrate, test and deploy modifications to the existing ROSS application that provides the capability for an authorized ROSS user to set a *Critical Item Flag* for NFES Catalog Items and view standard reports of NFES items that have been declared as critical.
- Design, develop, integrate, test, and deploy a telephone interface for authorized contractors and overhead personnel to modify resource status, availability and location.
- Design, develop, integrate, test and deploy functionality within the ROSS application that permits the local printing of all active² (at the time of the outage) resource orders and current (at the time of the outage) resource status when systems servers are un-available due to server outage or wide area network (WAN) outage.
- Convert existing MapXtreme Commercial Off-the-Shelf products, code and associated data deployed within the ROSS application to utilize ESRI ARC Internet Map Server (ARC IMS).
- Move Ross application software, system software, and database from test environment to production.

These change management items are only a few of the good ideas brought forward by dispatchers, IRM staffs, and managers. Double-clicking on [ROSS Change Management Plan](#) will access the current plan.

¹ A draw down level is a pre-defined (by an authorized person) resource quantity threshold that is used to compare with a current resource quantity.

² Open is defined as those orders that have resources that are currently assigned (not demobilized) current open requests that are open (pending or placed).

Frequently asked Questions.....and.....Answers!

Question: Will ROSS be accessible at incidents?

Answer: Accessibility at incidents is not within the current implementation scope of the project, however, because ROSS is a web-based application, in the future, it may be available at incidents.

Question: Do we need to do something in advance to prepare for ROSS?

Answer: YES. Basic computer skills are strongly recommended. Make sure your office has a **sufficient number of PCs** for daily use and expanded dispatch. And since ROSS is a web-based application, it will be very helpful for your office to be set up with **Internet access** and your staff to have **basic web navigation abilities**.

Question: Will there be dial-in access (via modem) at the National Interagency Technology Center)?

Answer: YES. A limited number of lines will be available – only as a last resort. The primary way to access ROSS is through the web.

Question: What ways are there to search the DMS address book? i.e: Warm Springs shows up in “WA” search even though it is in Oregon.

Answer: DMS addresses can be accessed two ways in Netscape Messenger. 1) Click on *communicator, address book* and then *show names containing “warm”*. 2) Click on *communicator, address book* and then *search for*. This is an *advanced search* which allows a search by name, phone #, organization, e-mail or city.

Question: Who has the authority to change a DMS password?

Answer: A password can be changed remotely by an authorized person in control of the profile. Instructions to complete this procedure can be found in the DMS training manual.

We encourage involvement, support, and articles from the IRM and CACHE communities in upcoming issues of this newsletter. Please call Lynn Pisano-Pedigo (303.275.5164) with any ideas, comments and/or recommendations for articles. To learn more about ROSS, the Dispatch Messaging System, check out the ROSS web page at <http://nwccg.gov/ross> or call 208.373.4099.

