The Cardinal Project Newsletter

March 2014
Part 3, Issue 7

www.cardinalproject.virginia.gov

Email us at:
ProjectCardinal@DOA.Virginia.gov

Project Status

The Testing Phase is well underway. Department of Accounts employee, Henry Bosman of the Cardinal Project team reports: "Testing has been the most exciting phase because it has helped me see how all the hard work that the Commonwealth has done is coming together."

We continue to work with interfacing agencies to design, build, and unit test interfaces.
Activities completed during the last month include:
- Business Process Workshops (BPW), which highlighted some of the key impacts Cardinal may have on agencies. You can see the BPW presentations on the Cardinal website's home page.
- March Interface Meeting with the interface pilot agencies

Accounting Basics

As the Commonwealth transitions from CARS to Cardinal, many things will change. For example, users will be required to designate debit and credit accounting entries without the use of transaction codes. And depending on the transaction type, the system may generate offsetting entries and/or entries to balance transactions by Fund. In Accounts Payable, vendor payment transactions will generate offsetting entries to a liability account instead of cash. Once the the payment due date approaches, the system will generate an automatic entry to relieve the liability account and credit cash.

Because of changes like these, the Commonwealth is providing a two-day **Accounting Fundamentals** course in April and May 2014 for the Cardinal Wave 1 agencies. The course will be offered to Wave 2 agencies in the future.

This course (which is not system training) includes the following accounting topics: Accounting Basics, How to Process an Accounting Transaction, Accounting Rules and Regulations, Cardinal Chart of Accounts, Governmental and Fund Accounting, and Overview of Financial Statements.

This course is recommended for core accounting staff using Cardinal, including those with accounting degrees, certificates, and/or professional licenses. For some, it will be reinforcement training, and for others, it will provide a basic foundation that will enhance their ability to perform accounting processes and to utilize Cardinal more effectively. For Cardinal users who only perform data entry or inquiry functions, this course may not be necessary.

We look forward to a great interactive training course!

Commitment Control

Commitment Control represents the Cardinal terminology for budgetary accounting. Cardinal budget structures enable the tracking or controlling of expenditures against expenditure budgets, and revenues against revenue estimates. (Reference the Cardinal Tweet in Cardinal February 2014 Newsletter for more details on budget control options).

Cardinal will have several **Statewide Budget Structures** (Appropriation, Allotment, Operating Plan, and Official Revenue Estimate) and each of these is interfaced from the Department of Planning and Budget's Performance Budgeting system into Cardinal. The first two listed will be controlling structures, which will place a firm limit on the expenses to ensure the budgets are not exceeded. The last two will be tracking structures, which will be used to facilitate budget to actual reporting, but will not stop a transaction that exceeds the budget amount.

In addition to Statewide Budget Structures, some Wave 1 agencies have elected to establish **Agency Budget Structures** (e.g., the Agency Operating Budget, the Agency Project Budget, and the Agency Revenue Estimate Budget). Agency structures will be tracking structures and are designed to provide for more detailed reporting of budgets based solely on the agency's needs. These budget structures allow for better operational budget to actual reporting and could replace offline Excel spreadsheets, and enable decision makers to make more-informed agency level decisions.

The agency's use (or lack thereof) of Agency Budget Structures will affect which budget reports are available. The Reports Catalogue lists some of the more frequently used budget to actual reports and provides a description of each. Visit the Cardinal Website DOA Toolbox to view the current listing of key reports and queries.

SpeedTypes and SpeedCharts

Frequently, users have common transactions that use the same accounting distribution repeatedly. In Cardinal, agencies can create shortcut keys called SpeedTypes and SpeedCharts for these frequently used combinations. SpeedTypes and SpeedCharts increase data entry efficiency and accuracy.

When a SpeedType or SpeedChart value is entered on a transaction, pre-determined Chart of Account (COA) values automatically populate on the accounting distribution line. The number of pre-determined COA values that populate can be few or many. For example, one SpeedType value may only populate Fund and Program. Another may populate Fund, Program, Project, and Department. You may have to enter additional required ChartFields to complete the transaction.

SpeedTypes are used in General Ledger journal entries, budget entries, Accounts Receivable direct journals (i.e., Funds Receipts), and employee expense reports. SpeedCharts are used for vouchers and can be set up to split a distribution line. SpeedTypes and SpeedCharts values are alphanumeric; the values may be numbers, letters, or a combination of both (for example, "ABC123").

Agencies have the option of determining whether or not to use SpeedTypes and SpeedCharts, the values for each, and the number of pre-determined ChartFields that are populated with each. In the example below, a SpeedType value **92100** (Administration) is keyed into the journal line and the pre-determined values of Fund **01000**, Program **799001**, and Department **92100** automatically populate.

꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃꽃

Upcoming Activities

- **Train-the-Trainer activities** – beginning in April 2014
- **Role Mapping Workshops and activities** – beginning in April 2014. Role mapping will define the end users' access to screens and data in Cardinal, as well as their training requirements.
- **Employee and Vendor Data conversion activities** - March through April 2014