The Cardinal Project Newsletter

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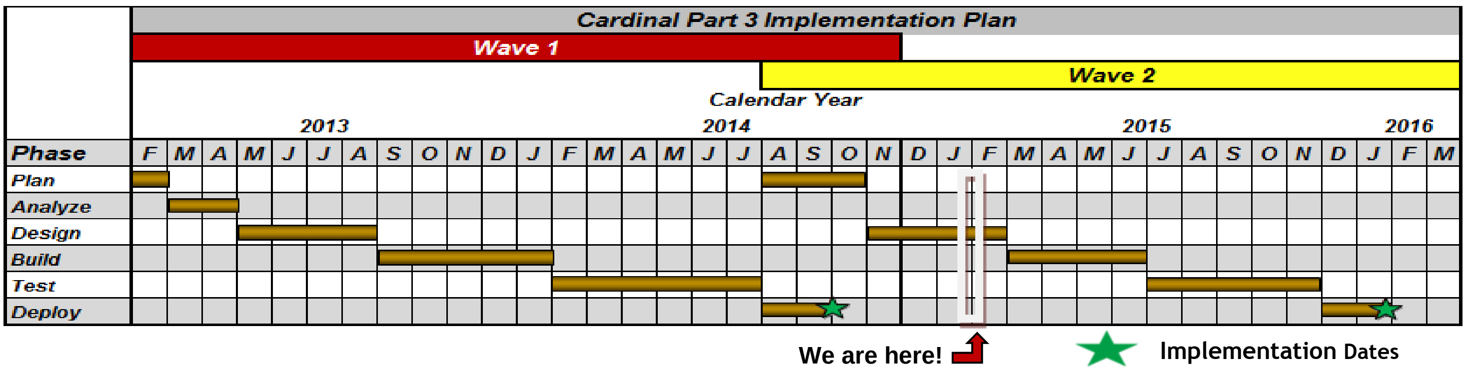
www.cardinalproject.virginia.gov

Email us at:
ProjectCardinal@DOA.Virginia.gov

Project Status



The Project continues to move quickly as we are approaching the fourth and final month of the Design Phase for Wave 2 agencies. Wave 2 activities completed since our last newsletter in November 2014 include:

- Interface Kickoff
- Identification and Confirmation of Interfaces
- Interface Workshops on Accounts Payable, Expenses, Accounts Receivable, and General Ledger
- Selection and Mapping of Agency Chart of Accounts and Agency System Fields to Cardinal Fields
- Budget Structure Kickoff
- January Interface Meeting
- Delivery of Cardinal Overview by Primary Contacts to Agencies

Interfacing Agency – What Does Cardinal Mean to Me?

By now, all agencies have been engaged in Cardinal and understand moving from CARS to Cardinal is a significant effort for both the agencies and the Cardinal team. This is particularly true for interfacing agencies. Not only do they have to complete the same task list as the online agencies, but in addition, they must also design, develop, test and implement a series of new interfaces from their agency-based system(s) to the new statewide accounting system. In some cases, this requires recoding their legacy systems to “undo” CARS specific logic. But the changes will reach far beyond modifications to program logic.

Cardinal is a modern enterprise resource planning (ERP) system that has significantly more functionality than CARS, and as a result, requires much more effort to set up or configure an agency for use. Another big change is that the Commonwealth is adopting a new Chart of Accounts structure. New accounting string fields have been introduced, more stringent rules applied to the use of fields, and even new values (numbering schemes) for common fields such as Fund, Program, and Account have been created.

Wave 2 agencies will begin using Cardinal in February 2016, but the system will not officially replace CARS as the Commonwealth’s official system of record or “set of books” until July 2016. Subsequently, all interfacing agencies that send transactions from agency-based financial systems will be required to reconcile all of the systems (agency systems, CARS and Cardinal) from February through June of 2016 to ensure the key financial data is accurate.

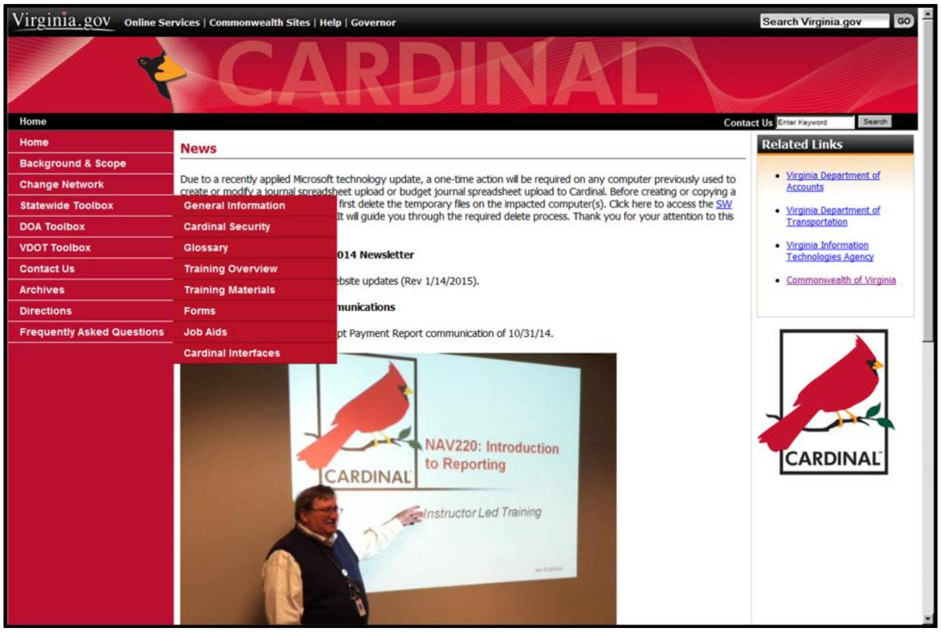
When required, agencies will have to make adjustments online in Cardinal. For example, when interfaced transactions have a Cardinal edit or budget checking error, agencies will be responsible for making the corrections online in Cardinal versus depending on the Department of Accounts staff to correct the errors. When corrections are made to these transactions online, agency staff will also be required to approve the changed transactions online. In order to do all of this, agencies will have to be fully configured in Cardinal, including: chart of accounts setup, establishment of workflow rules, and proper end user security. In addition, interfacing agency staff will have to be well-versed in Cardinal functionality and business processes. They will gain this understanding by attending business process workshops and the same Cardinal end user training as an online user.

While some agencies may view this as a lot of work for minimal benefit (other than meeting statutory requirements!), many agencies are planning on taking advantage of the improved functionality offered by Cardinal. This includes directly entering some of their transactions into the system instead of building costly interfaces. Additionally, Cardinal provides very robust reporting that is a significant improvement over what’s available in CARS today. There are hundreds of reports, queries and online inquiries inside Cardinal that could be very beneficial to the interfacing agencies.

Learn more about the Cardinal system by visiting the Cardinal website, reading future newsletters, and talking with the Cardinal Change Network members representing your agency.

Cardinal Website

The Cardinal website (pictured below) is located at http://www.cardinalproject.virginia.gov; it is your one-stop shop for Cardinal related information. It is easy to use and you may want to mark it as a favorite for quick access. The website is dynamic; as materials are developed and updated, they are loaded onto the website. In calendar year 2014, the Cardinal website experienced 40,498 hits, viewing 109,454 different pages on the website.



News and *Upcoming Events* are regularly updated on the Home Page of the website. The *News* section includes links to current Cardinal related communications, Cardinal Newsletters and website updates. The menu on the left side of the Home Page includes *Archives* which has archived communications and newsletters.

Also included on left side of the Home Page are *Change Network* and *Statewide Toolbox* pages. The *Change Network* page has links to Wave 2 Agency and Change Network Member lists and Wave 1 and 2 presentations inclusive of Change Network meetings, Kickoff meetings, and Conference Room Pilots.

The most visited section of the website is the *Statewide Toolbox* page, which cascades into a multitude of additional documents as displayed above. There are *Training Materials, Forms, Job Aids*, and *Simulations*. These tools will be explained in future Cardinal newsletters, but feel free to view them at any time. The last page under the *Statewide Toolbox* is *Cardinal Interfaces* which has draft functional designs and file layouts of the Cardinal Interfaces.

Cardinal Tweet – Workflow

Workflow is the tool Cardinal uses to route certain items through the approval process. Workflow in Cardinal has many benefits including enforcement of specific separation of duties rules. Usually, the user who enters a transaction is different from the user or users who approve it. Workflow places the item that needs approving on the approver's worklist which is accessed from the Cardinal system Home Page. Once you open your worklist, you can click on the item needing approval and Cardinal directs you to the related page where you can review and approve the transaction. Items remain on your worklist until they are worked.

There are different scenarios and flows of transaction approval, depending upon whether the transaction is entered online, interfaced, has errors, or requires multiple levels of approval. These different scenarios, as well as a more in-depth explanation of workflow, will be provided in our upcoming newsletter. Wave 2 agency representatives will also attend Workflow Workshops in March, 2015.

Upcoming Activities for Wave 2 Agencies

- Chart Of Accounts Build Kickoff
- Change Network Meeting #2
- February Interface Meeting
- Confirm CAFR Reporting Needs
- Complete Petty Cash Questionnaire
- Workflow Workshops