



Huot Lor, an ITS digital technician, installs a new Dell 450 computer in the office of Brad McAllester, director, Regional Planning.

1,200 Employees Get New Computers; Total of 3,000 Planned in 5-Phase Project

By Bill Heard, Editor

(Jan. 10) By the end of February, some 1,200 employees will have received new computers – the first of a group of 3,000 PCs that will be installed at Headquarters and in the operating divisions during a five-year project.

Last summer, Information Technology Services (ITS) launched a \$12 million program to upgrade the MTA's computers and software, starting with the oldest machines. The program calls for 800 new machines to be installed during FY 2001 and 500 each in the following two fiscal years.

Diminishing returns

"I saw that we were getting to a point of diminishing returns with the old machines," said Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett. "To maximize the life of the new machines, we chose a configuration with sufficient speed and memory to go through several software upgrades."

The new computers, manufactured by Dell, have a 450 MHz Pentium III processor with 128MB RAM running on Windows 98. All PCs will be upgraded to Microsoft Windows 2000 and Office 2000, beginning in the latter part of this year. All the new machines, of course, are Y2K compliant.

"The project leaders, Kelly Patton and Ignacio Saucedo, worked diligently with the vendor to synchronize the delivery of computers with the installation schedule," said Bennett. "They developed a process that allowed our technicians to conduct a smooth replacement of the new computers."

Improved Intranet access

One immediate benefit of the new computers has been to improve employees' access to and use of the MTA Intranet. As more and more

new computers were installed, the daily average of Intranet hits began to climb.

For the metro.net news pages, alone, there was a daily average of 667 hits in October, 956 in November and 1,002 in December. During the first four days of January, the average number of news page hits jumped to 1,423. The highest number of hits on one day - 1,733 - occurred Dec. 28, the Monday following the Christmas holiday.

Hits on departmental Intranet pages also have increased. As might be expected, the Human Resources page garners the most interest, with the number of hits on some days exceeding 100.

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