FIS 11i - Project team members, from back to front, are Catherine Wang, James Eng, Maggie Chen, Jessica Ho, Julie Ellis, Mike Nuyen, Rene Decena, Thu Nguyen, Julie Kung, Nicole Nguyen, Lois Keng and project manager Vincent Tee.

FIS System Due for Overhaul; Dec. 31 Rollout for Major Upgrade

By BILL HEARD, Editor
(Aug. 23, 2001) The MTA's Financial Information System (FIS) reached its fifth birthday in March and, although it received a tuneup for Y2K, some felt it was due for a major overhaul.

So, get ready for FIS 11i – a conversion from the current "character-based" system, in which almost all information has to be keyed in, to a user-friendly, information-rich Windows-based system.

"This is a major upgrade," says Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett. "It's going to be more than a face lift. It will look different and be different."

Conversion to FIS 11i will begin at 6 p.m., Dec. 22, and will be available for general use Dec. 31. Training for those who will use FIS 11i on a daily basis – Procurement, Accounting and OMB staff, along with administrative analysts – will begin Aug. 28.

150 training classes

Before year's end, ITS will have conducted 150 half-day classes to train all employees, including managers, who will use the system.

Project manager Vincent Tee agrees that FIS 11i will be different. For one thing, FIS users will be able to access the system from Internet Explorer and will be able to move data into Excel for analysis.

"Our goal was to make it easier to get financial information to the user and then make it easier for the employee to use," he says.

The new system will allow users to click and drag portions of a document with a mouse instead of keying in all data. A user can obtain expanded information about a requisition, purchase order, invoice or check by using the "drill down" function.

"It allows you to access many different levels of information just by pointing and clicking," explains Bennett.

'Workflow tracking'

Another advantage of FIS 11i will be "workflow tracking." No longer will paper documents, such as invoices, be routed from desk to desk, being delayed for days...or even lost. Instead, invoices will be scanned to become electronic images that can be forwarded through the system to those who need to review and approve them.

The system also will permit departments to electronically attach supporting documents to a requisition. These electronic documents can flow through the system with the requisition, eliminating the need to provide paper copies to Procurement.

A user also can follow the progress of the document through the system to locate it at any time. The system will even issue a "tickler" notice every five days to keep the document moving.

"FIS 11i will help everyone involved by making the process more automated," says Bennett. "It gets us closer to the paperless office."

Working with Tee on the FIS 11i project were senior programmer analysts Catherine Wang, Julie Kung, Lois Keng and Maggie Chen; programmer analysts James Eng and Jessica Ho; and consultants Mike Nuyen, Thu Nguyen, Tai Nuyen and Nicole Nguyen. Chief Financial Officer Richard Brumbaugh is the project's sponsor.

[Back to Bulletin Board](Back_to_Bulletin_Board)