

National Finance Center's (NFC) Customer Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 7, 2020

9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. eastern standard time (EST)

Roll Call

NFC Employees

Anita Adkins, NFC
Anthony Priola, NFC
Trudy Sandefer, NFC
Dawn Hughes-Morris, NFC
Sharon Cannon, NFC
Renee Pellissier, NFC
Debby Tatum, NFC
Wardell Jones, NFC
Adrienne Fourcade, NFC
Chris Cutitto, NFC
Cherie Landry, NFC
Alisa Wells, NFC
Tracey Hoolahan, NFC
Eileen Hamblen, NFC
Ed Dozier, NFC
Lisette Lopez, NFC
Lenore Mannino, NFC
Sandie Mikell, NFC
Emily Sandefer, NFC
Wendy Banks, NFC
Michael Campbell, NFC
Maria Bertucci, NFC
Lynn Moaney, USDA
Amalia Karambellas, Peace Corps
Donna Goode, USAID

Agency Employees

John McPhaul, AOC
LaRell Faulkner, DOL
Lonnie Davis, OSC
Mahasti Pourdastan, DHS
Manoj Pillai, USAID
Maria Wennersten, Smithsonian
Marlo Blue, NEH
Michelle Emmons, CNS
Natalie Tyce, FDIC
Raven Andrews, USAID
Sheonna Gibson, Treasury
Sherrice Macklin, Access Board
Shirley Sprinkle, DOL
Stephanie Forster, Treasury
Stephanie Harris, Peace Corps
Tajuana Dill, FCC
Takeisha Bowens, AOC
Tanisha Gordon, AOC
Terry Cook, DOJ
Thresa Thompson, Treasury
Traci Stackhouse, LOC
Traci Orange, DOL
Trisha Christian, SBA
Vanessa Prout, DNFSB
Veronica McCray, DNFSB

NFC Employees

Eunice Meade, GAO

Agency Employees

Opening Comments

Fiscal Year 2021 Focus- Anita Adkins

Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 has been nothing short of uniquely extraordinary, and we thank you for your support. Your trust, patience, and understanding given with each challenge has contributed to our ability to sustain operations and service our customers. There were several critical initiatives accomplished in a short period of time. In our Retirements area, many changes to the processes have been implemented to better serve you during this time. The CARES Act and the OSADI Tax deferral were also implemented successfully. These were accomplished by the dedicated NFC leaders and their staff.

Today, I am affirming NFC's proactive stance and a customer-centric commitment to the operational services and programs we provide to you so that you are successful. Going forward in fiscal year (FY) 2021, we are continuously striving to do and be better for our customers both collectively and individually. The vision for NFC is changing and growing for all areas, to improve, sustain, and strengthen our business. NFC delivers payroll with precision every 2 weeks, and that is service from the heart. Our mission is our reality. In the new fiscal year, you can expect more strategies including exploration and implementation of new technologies. We listen and we hear you. We are taking customer feedback and using the data we have gathered to make informed decisions to make work easier. We will improve the quality, strengthen our security, and provide continuous reliability of our services to deliver on our mission. This does require a shared ownership, responsibility, and buy-in with your commitment and accountability to protect our data.

We are evolving as experts in the interpretation and implementation of legislative policy. NFC promotes viable service offerings of Human Resources and Payroll services

through our suite of robust stand-alone and integrated solutions. NFC is adopting a new and different mindset in managing customers across our training platforms. We are building a vibrant customer engagement experience for next calendar year. Our Financial and Cost Management services will be evolving so that we will be united in how we are managing our interagency agreements and service level agreements, to provide project support. NFC is investing in ourselves to invest in you. This includes all employees, business partners, vendors, contractors, and customers.

NFC management also reiterated Ms. Adkins assurances about NFC's focus in the new fiscal year.

Planning for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021—Sharon Cannon

The Financial Management Office (FMO) plays an important role in ensuring the proper resources are in place for NFC submission. The FMO Staff manages the budget and facilitates the interagency agreements (IA) for customers. I am pleased to announce that Doug Burns has been selected as the Chief of FMO. Doug's staff works directly with you for our annual agreements. Our commitment to our partnership with you is our focus. With the Global Pandemic, the Fiscal Year Annual Agreement has been shifted to a digital platform. This allowed us to work with remote stakeholders in a digital workflow. The change to the digital workflow caused some initial delays in getting IAs out to customers, for which NFC apologizes. Currently, we are working to complete the final step for approximately 15 percent of the folio. The remaining agreements will be available in the coming days. We ask that customers review the agreement closely. NFC is prepared for FY21 and looks forward to providing the service you expect.

NFC Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)—Sharon Cannon

NFC Response to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Hurricane Season

This year we have reached the 25th named storm. Most recently we had hurricane Delta in the Gulf of Mexico. At this point we do not intend to deploy; however, we do have a plan if it should come to that as it moves closer to shore. Recently we have deployed to our COOP site for both Hurricanes Laura and Sally. If we do have to deploy, NFC does not expect any disruption in service to our customers.

Business Enhancements

ServiceNow- Renee Pellissier

NFC continues our investment in transforming and streamlining our customer service offerings using ServiceNow (SN) capabilities.

In June 2020, NFC positively impacted our security posture by successfully migrating our ServiceNow instance from a FedRAMP Moderate Facility to a FedRAMP High Facility. NFC provided two new service catalogs and functionality for Retirement Requests and Military Service Deposits allowing electronic submission of cases. Simultaneously, we also launched auto-encryption of attachments for these two new catalogs, again positively impacting the NFC security posture.

In August 2020, NFC uploaded a complete catalog of customer service portal training videos that are now available on NFC's Web site via NFC University. We successfully upgraded our ServiceNow instance to the Orlando version. This upgrade puts us one step closer to our Customer Service Management Consumer Portal page, which is a great segue into our upcoming work stream.

Work Stream (targeted for 2nd Quarter FY-21)

The Customer Service Management (CSM) module is being developed to provide a customer-centric platform target for the second quarter of FY 21, which includes:

- Executive dashboards for external Departments and Agencies at the appropriate level. This solution will provide a much-needed view across Departments and Agencies of the many service offerings provided by NFC.
- New dashboards for Servicing Personnel Officers and/or Benefits Processing Officers at the appropriate Personnel Office Level.
- New automated end-to-end Training Request functionality to request NFC training.

Calendar of Events—Wardell Jones

On the NFC Home page, there is a Calendar of Events for customers, which allows us to provide information on dates and projects. The Calendar of Events is a tool for customers to see what NFC is currently working on, what to expect, and what to prepare for. We will be adding a feature to show scheduled maintenances, as well as scheduled releases and off-cycle releases. This will include the projects that are going in with those releases.

Customer Engagement Experience

The Customer Engagement Experience (CEE) was originally planned for June of this year and was postponed as a result of COVID-19. We have decided to postpone until sometime in 2021, most likely in June. As we prepared for the CEE, NFC had myriad functions, presentations, and activities we were looking forward to sharing with you. Our preference is to have the event in person, rather than in a digital capacity. There is a benefit to meeting with you face-to-face.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

NFC is very customer-centric, and we want to do everything we can in order to get information and feedback from our customers. We have various ways of communicating via customer notifications, board meetings, and bulletins. NFC would like to get feedback from our customers, to see what you want, and what NFC can do to improve our services.

NFC's plan is to conduct a Customer Satisfaction Survey for all our customers sometime in January 2021. We have not done a complete survey like this in 5 years. This will be a comprehensive survey, to use the information in our overall strategic planning.

Software Change Request Guidelines – Tony Priola

NFC frequently gets requests to explain the Software Change Request (SCR) process. Each Agency has a designated authorized submitter, so there are no duplicate requests. Request are initiated when Agencies submit a request to the NFC.GESDRequest@usda.gov mailbox. Our Project Control Office logs the request in our tracking system and establishes the project. Once the SCR number is created, the project receives a Project Owner within 15 days, either in Requirements or Project Control.

The Project Owner will then review the request and what is involved, and if it needs an Interagency Agreement (cost agreement), they work with FMO to set that up. After the initial analysis for the project is complete, NFC will create a Functional Requirements Document (FRD), to set expectations of what will go into the project and how long implementation could take.

We are in the process of tweaking the IA process. Originally, we charged a 10% fee upfront to begin work on the requirements. This process has changed to categorize the projects into "small," "medium," and "large" to determine the initial IA cost and eliminate some of the paperwork involved moving forward.

Another enhancement we are working on is establishing priority categories, assigned to the different SCRs. The priority listings are for Agencies who submit multiple projects, so we know which ones to work on first. Priorities will be based on customer input.

NFC works under the Economy Act, and therefore do not receive any direct appropriations. All the money we receive are based on Payroll Personnel, EmpowHR, and T&A rates that have been established. This cost takes care of all your operation and maintenance activities. Anything above the base service cost will come with an IA.

Once the FRD is reviewed internally, it is then sent to the customer via the Client Management Branch. We ask that the Agency review the document and return it signed within 14 days of receipt. The signed IA and FRD allow us to establish an implementation pay period. The project goes through an internal quality assurance testing before it goes to the customer user acceptance testing (CUAT), and during that time you get to validate the changes in an end-to-end user acceptance test environment. Scheduled releases occur in Pay Period (PP) 06, PP13, and PP20. CUAT occurs 2 pay periods prior to the implementation pay period, and that allows the Agency to sign off on implementation of the project. Once the project implements, NFC leaves it open for 2 weeks for a post-implementation analysis. If no issues arise, the project manager closes the SCR and changes the state to “complete” in ServiceNow.

All of this is part of our governance process.

Questions:

DHS: As NFC finalizes our process, is there a way to provide a timeline? This would allow us to tell components when to expect the FRD. Also, a timeline of how long it takes for internal NFC review.

Answer: We are working to provide a little more transparency. We are working on our Project Review Team meetings, and how we can improve those meetings and ways to improve the software development lifecycle. (Take back as an Action Item for how we can improve this.)

FCA: The normal process to the end, is to have QUAT, then CUAT, then implementation. What happens during PP06, PP13, and PP20?

Answer: Those are NFC’s scheduled software release pay periods. Rather than having releases every pay period, we lump them together. PP04 and PP05 would be the testing pay periods for a PP06 scheduled release.

Application Enhancements

Regulatory/Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Initiatives – Cherie Landry

Project 43150, Benefits Administration Letter (BAL) 20-304 Changes to Agency Contributions for FERS, FERS-RAE and FERS-FRAE Beginning in Fiscal Year 2021 – PP21, 2020.

This BAL was published in May 2020. There is no action required by the Agency or employee. This is simply a table update in TMGT so that the new Agency contribution rates are updated and take place starting in PP21, 2020.

Project 39891, TSP Spillover Method for Catch-Up Contributions – PP26, 2020

This project is mandated by the Thrift Savings Board the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (FRTIB), the Agency that administers the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). They will switch to the “spillover” method for catch-up contributions beginning in the first pay period of Tax Year 2021. This change will apply to all active civilian and uniformed services members turning age 50 or older. It will simplify the catch-up program for both participants and agencies. For Federal employees, the TSP Catch-up document will no longer be available in the EmpowHR, EPIC, or EPP applications. Agencies with their own 401K catch-up plans have the autonomy to implement later.

Project 44081, Presidential Executive Order for Deferred Employee Deductions (OASDI) Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance, Phase 1– PP18, 2020; Phase 2 – PP26, 2020

The OASDI deferral was implemented in PP18 as per the Presidential Executive order. NFC is waiting on answers to outstanding questions posed to OMB/OPM related to this project, but the repayment phase will begin in PP26, 2020. Additional information will be forthcoming as it is received.

Project 43505, OPM Interim Rule Annual Leave & National Emergencies – PP01, 2021

This ruling from OPM provided a streamlined process for the restoration of annual leave during national emergencies. Agencies will follow the normal process for Restored Annual Leave actions using Document Type 165 (Authorization for Restored Annual

Leave).

Question: An employee received an award in PP19; however, only the OASDI was deducted on the award even though it pushed the employee over the limit.

Answer: Awards are not included in the OASDI deferral, so that's why deductions were taken from the award.

EmpowHR 9.2 Project- Renee Pellissier

Estimated Timeline for Conversions:

Phase 1 (DOJ) - FY20-FY21

- Analysis, Development and Unit Testing complete – November 2020
- IT Testing – April 2020-November 2020
- QA testing/Training – November 2020-February 2021
- CUAT testing – March 2021-April 2021
- Go-Live and Stabilization – May 2021–June 2021

Phase 2 - FY21-FY22

- Analysis, Development, and Unit Testing complete – July 2021
- IT Testing – July-August 2021
- QA testing/Training – August-September 2021
- CUAT testing – September-October 2021
- Go-Live and Stabilization – November 2021–December 2022

Phase 3 - FY22

- Analysis, Development, and Unit testing complete – February 2022
- IT testing – February-March 2022

- QA testing/Training – March-April 2022
- CUAT testing – April-May 2022
- Go-Live and Stabilization – June 2022 – July 2022

Phase 4 - FY22-FY23

- Analysis, Development, and Unit Testing complete – August 2022
- IT Testing – August-September 2022
- QA testing/Training – September-October 2022
- CUAT testing – October-November 2022
- Go-Live and Stabilization - Early December 2022-January 2023

Agency Engagement Tasks:

- Recommended clean-up in 9.0 (invalid data has potential to cause issues)
 - Worklist/Not Applied – old actions in a “work in progress” status
 - Reports-To
 - Invalid Emplids OR Duplicate Emplids
 - OperIds/Security Roles – DSAs should work with HR offices to review current users and their application roles. Ensure consistency with assigning User IDs.
 - First initial, Last initial, Emplid
 - NFC Identified data load Issues
- Review/Refine workflow requirements
- Provide feedback on the functional design of specific customizations
- Training

Information Technology Framework, Security, and Documents—Tony Priola

Data Masking Initiative

Remote Print Initiatives

In March 2020, when most Agencies were maximizing telework, NFC was asked to set up a virtual printer for some of our Agencies. While researching this request, NFC found a product called RPM Elite. With RPM Elite we can convert mainframe reports to a searchable PDF. With this, the customer can have a hard copy of the report and a PDF version of the same report. RPM Elite converts many print formats from many types of systems to a PDF. You can archive your PDF files to a network disk, email as an attachment or print to a compatible printer. RPM Elite will also save your Agency money by printing only the pages of a report that needs to be printed and not the entire report. Another area you will save money on is the reduction in paper needed to print reports, printer ink and a reduction in daily usage of printers which will lower maintenance costs. If your section printer goes offline for an extended period, this will not cause a work stoppage because your reports will be sent to a secured network shared drive\folder. The use of RPM Elite allows employees that work from home to be able to receive the hard copy report that is now in a PDF format. This will allow employees to be able to complete their work functions in a telework status.

We have completed a proof of concept with the NFC Contact Center (NCC). We printed several daily reports, SF50s, and SF1150s. We were able to verify that the reports were searchable and that you can select what pages in a report you want to print if needed. Today we have expanded the proof of concept from NCC. We have tested OPM forms and are now testing retirement cards. We have printers created and tested for each branch. We also have the folder structure to store files for each printer in each branch.

For those interested, we want to share this information with you. You can get more information from your Client Management Branch (CMB) liaison. NFC has started the implementation phase of this work. To use the RPM Elite software, it does involve a

purchase of the product on the user's end. Once purchased, NFC can work with you to ensure the U-printers are aimed to the virtual printer.

RPM Additional features:

Note: We have not tested some of these features.

- Print hard copy and soft copy at the same time.
- Uniquely naming reports to better identify them
- Adding watermarks to PDF to help identify reports
- PDF permissions and password protection. This would allow us to set a unique password and restrictions to PDFs.

Questions:

Treasury: Is there a cost for this?

Answer: I believe it is minimum, something like \$5,000-\$10,000.

Smithsonian: Will the WGI forms and probationary forms be included?

Answer: NFC is doing our own initial pilot for remote printing; however, so far, we have had success with what we are testing. We can work with the Agency individually to determine what forms should be next.

Is there a timeframe or period when customers should start requesting implementation?

Answer: Begin with procuring the software. If you have questions reach out to your CMB liaison and NFC will get you more information.

Operational Reminder

Fiscal Year End T&A Accounting — Chris Cutitto

We would like to take this time to remind customers of the notifications sent on September 21st, reminding the Agencies that NFC no longer prorates accounting across fiscal years. Therefore, Agencies should not use stored accounting in PP20. Instead Agencies should prepare a single T&A distributing all time and pay status for each line of accounting for FY20 and FY21. In PP20 of 2019, many of our customers used stored accounting to process T&As. This caused over 22,000 T&As to go into suspense. NFC

then had to work extended hours to make manual corrections to ensure customers were paid timely. Agencies may resume using stored accounting in PP21.

Annual Non-Disclosure of Acquisition (NDA) Forms— Tracey Hoolahan

With FY21, the Client Management Customer Board contacts will be sending out the annual NDA (nondisclosure agreement) form. This is something that is sent every year; and for FY21 we plan on having 100% participation in those who attend the Customer Board Meeting. We appreciate your compliance in signing this form and sending it back to the Customer Board Mailbox.

Question & Answer Session—Anita Adkins

No questions were asked during this time.

Closing Comments—Anita Adkins

We are starting this new fiscal year with a new energy and a customer-centric focus. We are very hopeful, and the possibilities are endless on the number of initiatives and process improvements. The past has informed us of what works and what does not. We will use that data as we continue to be committed and evolve using high standards. We asked Customer Board attendees to provide feedback and topics they would like discussed at future Customer Board meetings. Any questions should be sent to your CMB representative.

Adjourn

Future Customer Board Meeting:

January 13, 2021, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. (EST)

April 7, 2021, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. (EST)

August 4, 2021, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. (EST)

October 6, 2021, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. (EST)