



IRIS INSIGHT

IRIS - Providing Insight to Alaskans

December 2012

FAQs

What are the benefits of implementing IRIS?

Improved government transparency & accountability - The establishment and adoption of common accounting rules and consistent financial controls for all SOA agencies will aid government transparency.

Support for better business decision-making - Real-time reporting capabilities from a single source or reliable information and consistent use of the SOA accounting structure will support informed business decision-making.

Increased operational efficiency - With the use of online forms as well as automated workflow and approval processes, IRIS will minimize paper processes, eliminate redundant data entry, and reduce data errors.

Improved security for sensitive information - IRIS will support security based on roles and reliable audit capabilities.

Enhanced disaster recovery and continuity of operations capabilities - Designed with architecture for rapid system recovery and high system availability, IRIS will aid speedy recovery and minimize downtime.

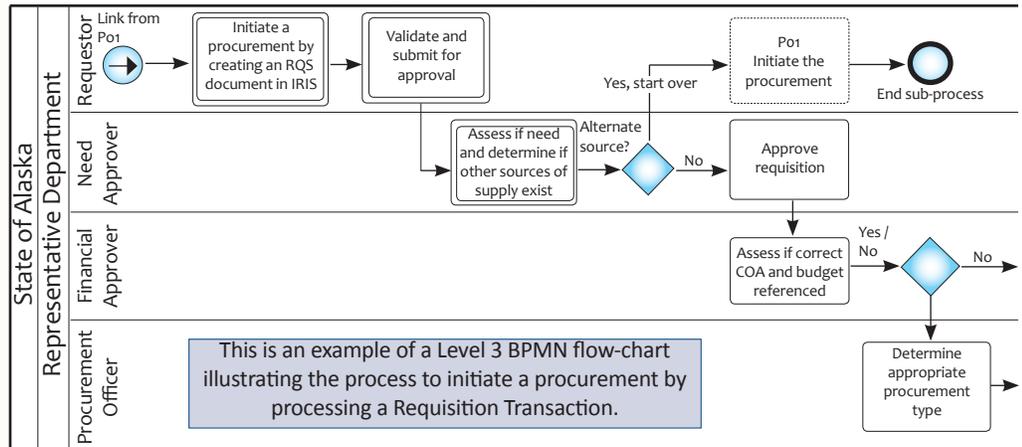
Long-term viability - Deployed on a flexible technology platform and operationally supported by a multi-year, renewable contract that provides ongoing technical support, regular software updates, and guaranteed service levels, IRIS will adapt to changing technology and demands.

For more FAQs visit:

<http://doa.alaska.gov/dof/iris/faq.html>.

What's Happening Now?

What is BPMN and Why is it Important to IRIS?



BPMN is shorthand for Business Process Model and Notation which is a standard way of creating a model of steps (flowcharts) that illustrate business process workflows. The IRIS Project Team developed SOA-specific BPMN flowcharts as a result of the AS IS meetings with department Subject Matter Experts last spring. These BPMN As Is flowcharts document the State's current business processes at a high level including guiding laws and rules, forms, and potential areas where the State may be able to reengineer how it does business. These As Is BPMN flowcharts were used as a starting point and blueprint for the To Be (prototyping) processes this past fall.

There are four levels of BPMN and they show different activity details.

BPMN Level	Type of Detail
Level 1	Describes process at a high level. Very generic.
Level 2	Shows breakdown between central (control) agencies and decentralized agencies.
Level 3	Shows the roles within the agencies that execute the tasks of the process.
Level 4	Shows the individual job-functions within the agencies' roles

To help partition and organize activities at different levels, BPMN flowcharts are organized into swimlanes. Depending on the level of the flowchart, each swimlane corresponds to a partition within the organization, such as a role or a function. For example, on a Level 3 flowchart, each swimlane represents a role.

Now that prototyping has concluded, the IRIS Project Team is documenting business processes and system configuration for IRIS based on what we heard and discussed during prototyping sessions. The IRIS Project Team will create a Level 3 BPMN flowchart for each of the State's business processes to be managed with IRIS. This is no small task as there are nearly 200 processes in the Financial and Procurement areas!

Taking the time to map the IRIS business processes using this standard methodology is crucial to the success of IRIS because it ensures the many moving pieces of the IRIS Project are all working towards the same goal. The BPMN flowcharts represent the steps required to execute the business process. IRIS is configured to support execution of these processes. These graphical notations will also support testing, training, and configuration activities that are associated with each business process.

In the new year, the IRIS Project Team will share the flowcharts we are producing. Want more BPMN? Visit <http://bpmnforum.com>.

Project Update: Technical Transition Plans

Since mid-November, the IRIS Technical Team has conducted 17 departmental meetings to review and update Technical Transition Plans (TTPs). TTPs outline how each department's business systems and interfaces will be impacted by the implementation of IRIS. These plans also begin the process of identifying the scope of work for each department and the IRIS Technical Team to ensure required conversions and updates can be made before go live in July 2014. The most important aspect of the process is remembering business processes and systems will change as a normal course of business before the final IRIS HR/Payroll module implementation in 2016. Both the departments and the IRIS Team will need to continue to engage each other and promote an effective communication channel to support these changes.

Different Times, Different Needs: A History Lesson in the State of Alaska's Accounting System

Collocation codes were developed for use in Programmed Budget of Alaska (PBA), the accounting system that preceded AKSAS, and are a means by which financial information flows into financial reporting structures. When AKSAS replaced PBA in 1984, the State continued to use the collocation code, or CC, to simplify the system conversion process even though the fields other than agency number lost their identity in the new system. In AKSAS, a CC is an eight-digit code that identifies the fund, appropriation, organization, internal program and default ledger code and is used to record financial activity. In the absence of an external reporting system, like the ALDER data warehouse, the CC was an important link that allowed reporting on historical data. Ironically, one drawback to the CC in AKSAS is that it can make historical reporting difficult. That's because the meaning of a CC can change over time if it is updated to point at different accounting elements. The implementation of the ALDER data warehouse solved that problem. ALDER allows you to select information by collocation code, or by the entities, such as appropriation, that it pointed to when the transaction processed.

In IRIS, the CC will be no more. Individual accounting entities, like fund and appropriation, will be entered directly. The memory of the collocation code may live on, however, in the form of accounting templates in IRIS. An accounting template, similar to an AKSAS easytran, allows you to save commonly used combination of accounting entries for easy re-use on a future transaction. In this way, IRIS can provide the streamlined data entry of the CC and fulfill the State's detailed financial reporting requirements.

As technology and business processes evolve, so do the State's business needs. Today, the State has a data warehouse to manage financial reporting, which changes what is needed in a new accounting system. In IRIS the financial information contained in the CCs will be maintain, yet represented in a different way.

Technical Spotlight: Data Warehouse Strategy

The IRIS Project is much more than the implementation of a new ERP system. It is a reengineering of the State's existing practices to bring enterprise wide improvements to the integration, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of the practices.

The State will transition from an environment where business functions and information are compartmentalized and isolated, to an environment where business functions and workflow are integrated and interactive, and information is shared across business functions and organizational units. The IRIS business process reengineering activities will preserve and strengthen existing business practices that are effective, while restructuring or replacing obsolete and non-performing practices. For example, IRIS will utilize the State's proven existing reporting system ALDER, but will extend and enhance the system to ALDER2.0 in order to accommodate the change in reporting needs caused by the combination of increased information, new workflow, and improved business processes. By continuing to deliver information in a familiar channel and form, ALDER2.0 mitigates risks typically associated with new development efforts and minimizes impact to the end-user community.

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: PROJECT MANAGERS

Teri Rasmussen and Ed Kissam are this month's team member spotlights. As our State and Contractor Project Managers, Teri and Ed play a crucial role in keeping the project on track by organizing tasks, people, time and resources.



Meet Teri: Prior to joining the State of Alaska, I served as the Client Services Manager at Physician Micro Systems for 12 years, managing a nation-wide

team that completed over 800 software implementation projects. In 2005, I began working for the State of Alaska, working in HSS-ITS and later DOA-ETS. I joined the IRIS Project Team as the Project Manager in July 2011, and feel fortunate to be part of this effort. I've always enjoyed technology projects that bolster and improve the business process and service delivery of an organization.



Meet Ed: With over 20 years of IT/technical and PM experience, I recently joined CGI in October of 2012. Prior to CGI, I worked for Colorado State University/

rSmart implementing a university reach administration tool called Quali Coeus. I also worked as a PM with IBM Global Services in many different roles, such as system implementations to global transitions and as the team lead for all support services transitioning domestic accounts to Asia Pacific. I am confident in the partnership of the State of Alaska and CGI in the successful implementation of the Advantage ERP system.