State of Alaska, Department of Administration
ETS Town Hall Meetings - April 2007 ~~ Questions and Answers

To help find your answers, the Q&As from the Town Hall have been grouped into several sections as outlined below. Even though some of the questions have multiple possibilities for placement, we did our best to sort them – and we tried to answer all the questions that came up during the 6 sessions! Additional Q&As will be consolidated into the FAQs on the website as they are received.

Will this Town Hall presentation be on the web?
Yes. It will be modified and enhanced after all locations are completed and then posted.

Is everything the 2003 version? I'm using that now in my department. Will there be any differences?
Yes, when all migration happens things will be slightly different - even if you already use 2003. And, scheduling and document sharing it will be much easier when all agencies are using the enterprise software.

What if our department is already discussing an upgrade to Outlook 2007?
All Executive branch agencies will initially be using Outlook 2003 on the new system. Once all of the agencies are using the same system, assessment will be conducted and plans for statewide upgrades to new systems will be developed.

Q&A Outline:

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A. The new Email – Outlook 2003:

Do we have to have capital letters as the first character of the email name?
No. The email name is not case sensitive.

What about hyphenated last names and those with apostrophes?
Hyphens and apostrophes are supported in the new system.

Will we be able to choose our own email name? Does my new mail have to be the same as my AKPAY (payroll) name or can I use my nickname? Will we be able to choose our own first name (e.g. Bill vs. William)?
All names are being transitioned "as is" from legacy systems. The email administrator will be able to change or correct it for you. It will generally be changed the same way it is changed now. You may have nicknames in the new system, check with your email administrator and/or your payroll contact.

How can we alter information in the global system that needs to be corrected?
Global information is generic and maintained at the system level, by system administrators and payroll personnel who have authorization to make changes for you, generally using the same process as today.

Will I be able to search my employees' email?
Administrators have elevated rights. Users must be given these rights within exchange. Exchange rights will be inherited in the Archiving system.

Can anybody access your email? …and vice versa?
No. If you share with your supervisor, they can look at your email, which is the same if your supervisor shares with you.

Can System Administrators access your email?

Administrators don't have permissions by default, they must be granted permissions. They can grant permissions to themselves, or you can grant them permissions. If permissions are granted by anyone other than yourself, it is logged in the system.

Can laptops be disconnected and not affect email functionality?

Yes, there will be no effect because the system will synchronize email from wherever you are.

Will we be able to synchronize with contact lists from home?

Yes, and it will integrate with your mobile devices too. The Contact list for each user is maintained by each user – and items there can be shared at that level as well as can be delegated at that level too.

How will laptop users get at their mail when they are on the road? How can we access email when we're traveling and have it synchronized when we return? Can laptop users download emails to work on while they are traveling?

OWA has full access to your email (it uses a cache mode, in the background) and synchronizes to the exchange server. The out-of-office reply function will suspend the 90-day deletion rule.

Will there be special conditions for travel and vacation so mail over 90 days old doesn't get deleted while someone is on leave?

Yes, the 90 day rule will be suspended when you turn on your out-of-office reply. Additionally there will be administrative holds, where the automatic deletion of mail is suspended.

Is there a way to get Outlook to pop up a warning message when you are turning off the Out of Office Wizard? Something like: "You are about to turn off Out of Office. You have e-mails older than 90 days that will be automatically deleted if you continue. Do you choose to continue?" Perhaps you already have plans for this. If not, something like this really should be in place before we have issues with accidental deletions. How many people have their mind on task when they first return from leave? I know I don't!

No, this is really not feasible.

Can we have a "department" contact list?

Yes. You can build any number of personal and/or enterprise lists of contacts for workgroup collaboration. There will also be a departmental address lists for each department.

Can you share a group list with someone else?

Sure, there are a couple of ways this can be done. You can create a distribution list and share it.

Can we have dynamic groups? (i.e. all employees in our division or at our address?)

Yes. Contact your IT Manager for assistance.

Will we be able to synchronize with Palms and Blackberries?

Yes. We will have full support for portable devices.

Can I "paste unformatted text" into body of messages like I do with Mozilla?

Yes.

When employees leave service, how can we manage their email?

Managers are responsible for assigning email to the proper person; see your IT manager for assistance.

Does the system alert you to the approaching 300mb email/ calendar limit?

Yes. It alerts at the 300MB level. When the 325MB level is reached sending will be blocked, and at 400MB level, receiving will also be blocked.

We were told that emails will be retained in our inbox for 90 days for the majority of State Offices - Does that Dept of Law still have only 30 days?

The Department of Law will be moving to the new state standard 90 day retention period. They are the only department in the state that currently has had a retention policy on email. The Department of Law firmly supports the adoption of a uniform, statewide retention policy by implementing the 90 day rule.

Having a uniform policy across the enterprise will provide the state with predictable, and legally defensible, e-discovery parameters.

How are you designating the email department name differences between Law and Labor?
Department name for Law is "LAW" and Labor is "DOL"

We have two people working in our division who have the same name. Will they have the same email address?
No. Each employee will have a unique email address. Employees with the same name will either have a number appended, eg "John.Smith1" or perhaps their nickname will be used. It is up to each department's IT designee to determine. In the original creation of email addresses, the new email was based upon the Hire Date, with the person having the "oldest" hire date getting being considered the "first person".

How can I find out where the person sending me email works?
Right-click on the person's name to view the person's information. Microsoft Outlook addresses information through several available address books, which include a global address book which includes all state employees; and the employee's personal, local address book.

Do I have to use a state computer to do this (right click on name to find out more) or can I use my home computer?
No. There are actually a couple of ways you will have the same functionality. The State is implementing Outlook Web Access so you can access your work email from home, which will include the same global address book you use from your work computer. You don't even have to have Outlook on your home computer! Or, the State uses Microsoft's *employee purchase program* and you can purchase Microsoft for your home computer. The purchase price of $20 includes Outlook, Word and Excel.

Ca*n Outlook import an address list maintained in an EXCEL spreadsheet?*
Yes, depending on what version of EXCEL you are using.

Will the email address for existing email groups change?
Yes, in the new system distribution lists will have to adhere to a new naming standard. Department network administrators are responsible for setting up department specific distribution lists, ETS will do the same for enterprise-wide distribution lists.

Messages that are deleted can be retrieved? What do you mean?
If the message is in a "deleted" folder, you will have seven days to retrieve the message and move it to another folder. However, when you empty the trash, the message is gone.

Inbox/sent email items are stored a maximum of 90 days. What if person is gone more than 90 days? Or is a seasonal worker?
The use of the Out of Office feature will suspend this rule. Employees can also let their designated IT staff know before going on extended leave.

If I want to retain an email permanently, can it be put in a folder with no time limit?
A retention period will need to be specified, unless special authorization is granted.

What if I just keep re-sending myself the email – will it be retained?
Every time you send that email, and then save it to a folder, the retention date will be reset.

What happens if I move emails to a folder which does not have retention date set?
If you create a new folder and do not indicate a retention period, a default rule of 135 days will automatically be assigned.

Who decides the names for my mail folders?
It depends on what policies your business unit or department has established. However, only the designated values for retention periods will work.

What if I make a mistake when moving a message?
Just click on the message and drag it to where it needs to go.

If I accidentally moved it to a folder that has a retention period specified, will a copy of the message stay in that folder after I've moved it elsewhere?
No. Only the "stub" – a brief synopsis of the message, a "shortcut" – remains.

I need to move files and emails from a number of years ago to MS Outlook. What date will be used to determine the retention period – the date the message was originally received, or the date that it was migrated to MS Outlook?
The received date is what sets the retention period. It is possible some migration methods will reset the dates to the date of migration – check with your department's IT manager.

In our division we have people who have been there for more than 10 years. If they move emails received more than 10 years ago, what date will be used to determine the retention period?
The received date will determine the retention period.

What is going to happen to emails that a department has stored locally?
Each department is preparing a migration plan. The migration plan will include information on what will happen to emails stored locally.

Will I be required to migrate my locally stored email?
Yes, you will need to do this within a year.

Are suffixes included on the subject line of the email or in the name of the folder?
Suffixes are put in the folder name.

What date does the archive system use to determine retention?
The date the email was received in the in box.

What is going to happen to Postini, the anti-spam software?
During the migration period, all Alaska.gov email will be spam filtered through generic rules.

Does this mean that there will be no access to Postini during migration?
Postini will not be configurable on individual basis for your Alaska.gov address until migration is completed. If this is a concern, during this period you can continue to have your email sent to your old state.ak.us address and access any blocked mail there.

Once an email has been filed, if you decide to delete it, does the email disappear from where you filed it?
Yes, however even though you deleted the stub, the email will remain in the archive store for the designated retention period,.

Sometimes I save emails in a word directory so I can keep the email with the attachment. When I open it (the email I saved with my attachment), it looks like an email from my current email system. When I re-open these (previously saved) documents after migration what will happen?
This won't affect that – it is outside email system

If I am searching but can't remember how long ago I archived the document – or in what folder – what will happen if I use a search tool? Will I be able to search for emails in multiple folders at once or do I have to search one folder at a time? Does the search look in both the exchange/outlook emails and the archived emails or does that require two separate searches?
One tool that is included with the new archive system is a new search tool. It will let you search by email or search through emails and attachments too. Multiple folders can be searched at the same time; it has many more options than Outlook 2003.

When I receive an email about a specific subject, can I write a rule so that it will be filed in a certain folder? Can you do this with sent messages as well? Can email rules for folders be applied to "sent" messages?
Yes. You can apply rules to different or all folders. However, there are a few options that must be done from inbox, for example reminders are connected to inbox.

B. The new Calendars – Outlook 2003:

How will conference rooms be scheduled?

Conference room delegations will be available in the new system. The Department IT managers will have procedures (similar to current ones).

What about resources on calendaring? Are they set up?

Departments are responsible for setting up accounts for resources that they control. Most departments are planning on setting up resources accounts after May 15th and before June 1st. Resource accounts will be used for things like overhead projectors, cars and conference rooms. Resource accounts are listed in the global address list so they can be scheduled through the calendaring program. Each conference room will have its own mailbox account, so someone can maintain the calendar for the room.

Will the calendar and scheduling function be automatically on for everyone?

Yes, it is part of Outlook 2003.

All of my boss's emails for calendar meetings/appointments are routed to my account. Can I program his schedule to send his calendar emails to me?

Sure. One way would be through delegating. Your boss can delegate you – the worker - to get all of his meeting/appointment requests

I set up phone conferences and then need to share plans with all the participants. Will I be able to do this with Outlook calendar?

Yes, and it is easy to do. When you setting up the meeting, just click on paper clip tool and then attach your document/s. Everyone who gets an invite will receive the attached document/s.

Will this also allow participants to see any changes being made or discussed during the meeting?

No. A future product, SharePoint would enable the ability to share a single document that all participants will be able to see and track changes that are being made by others. SharePoint is another phase of this project.

If I do not share my calendar, can someone still see if I am available for a meeting?

Yes. The Server will share whether you are free or busy, but not what you are doing if you haven't shared the meeting/event/appointment. You don't have to share stuff you don't want to. But if you don't put anything on calendar, you are always free!

Can you customize categories to create a different "title" for different types of business?

Yes, you can. Outlook is completely customizable and you can change just about anything you want, and you can use natural language for menu item, category, or date. For example, if you type "two weeks from Christmas" in the date field, Outlook will determine what the calendar date is. You can also organize by color. Outlook is totally open ended and there are many ways to organize information.

I work in law enforcement, schedule confidential meetings and must share personnel documents. Can I create rule for category "personnel" and make all the meetings and documents private?

Yes. You can do this with a rule - or you can use digital certificates, or you can encrypt the information

Is the default that everything is being shared?

No. The default is set to not share information.

Will it work with Cisco Security Agent turned on?

Yes.

If I calendar future deadlines in GroupWise (Dept. Law) will they automatically be rolled into outlook once the conversion takes place or am I better off waiting until the program is installed in our Dept.?

Yes, Law will be migrating all calendar entries, personal address books, email and archived email into the new system. You can continue to use your GroupWise calendar to schedule appointments, etc. All of your future-dated entries, and up to two years of prior entries, will be migrated.

C. The new Email Management, Archives & Retention:

Will there be a DVD of the "Archive" video?

Yes, we will enable departments to make their own DVD/CD copies of the video. Users in the major cities can easily watch the video over the web. We may make CD's available for the remote locations where bandwidth is challenged.

Is "Archiving" one place for everyone's email?

Yes. Agencies will set up rights for viewing that are similar to or the same as is done now.

Is all email stored on archive system? Can we have a local copy too?

It is recommended that agencies setup outlook in cache mode, so a local copy is on your local workstation– cache mode fully supports synchronization. Local copies should not be saved on hard drives because this interferes with the legal discovery process.

I have a hard time remembering to clean up my "sent" email items, what happens to them in the new system?

After 7 days, sent items are automatically archived and after 90 days the stubs are removed and the messages deleted.

How can we manage the stubs / shortcuts? (1st 600 characters of a message)

Use search function – for the archive messages. Email can be dragged and dropped into different archive folders and there is also a "remove" function for deleting its reference in your view (keeping it in the archives, but not listed in your folder). The archiving runs will be at night, so corrections to archives can be made during the day prior to nightly runs.

Is Email in the archives available to others?

Yes, if you designate it as shared, and by your email administrator.

How will I find email in the new archive system?

Enterprise Archive System has a very powerful and flexible search function

What are the rules and regulations for legal search and are they going to be posted?

The Attorney General's office will manage any legal discovery information requests.

What is a records retention schedule?

It is the accepted document that lists the "official" file, and the accepted retention and disposition rules. 95% of all documents created can be destroyed at end of retention period and do not need to be retained in Archives.

How long should I keep my email and attached files?

It depends on the record content. You need to work with your Senior Administrator to identify what program and records retention schedule are applicable. The retention rules built into Archiving will accommodate retention schedules.

How do we determine retention period? Where are the retention schedules?

It is determined the same as it is determined today please refer to records retention schedules. ETS will also put the following link to the schedules on the project web page. Here is the link to the General Administrative Records Retention Schedule and agency Program Records Schedules: http://www.archives.state.ak.us/records_management/records_management.html

Will we have to make the retention decision for ourselves?

Yes. Agency line staff will have to know the retention schedules and know information categories in order to decide which retention period is required.

What if we make a mistake? Who is responsible?

Each agency's records retention officer is responsible for ensuring the staff is trained properly. The Archiving system will be run at night, so mistakes can be corrected during the same day by moving the message to the correct folder.

Can a sub-folder have different retention than the parent folder?

Yes, the sub-folders inherit the properties of the parent folder, unless it is given a different retention by giving it a different suffix.

Is there a permanent retention available in electronic mail?

No, not at this time. (permanent records and formats i.e. film, paper, etc. are identified at the state archives office / agency level disposition)

What about saving project notes and emails without known or specific retention schedules?

There is a "technical research notes" retention schedule which can be used for records to be retained "until not needed"

How can we improve this system to have better management of records that should never be destroyed, even after the maximum retention period allowed?

SOA Archives & Records Management offices will be getting proactively involved in educating agency officers on retention schedules and procedures – we do not want to retain information unless it is required.

Will there be an alert about an email when the end of the retention period is approaching?

No. Email management is responsibility of the end-user.

What determines the retention start date?

The "Date Received" determines the retention start date. When items in the retention folder reach the end of the period, they will be deleted.

If you don't want to delete a 10-yr message at the end of 10 years, can you open and send to yourself?

Yes, it is sent as a different message because it has been changed by having it forwarded or sent.

How long will calendar items be retained?

The default retention for calendar items is 5 years.

D. Migration & Transition Questions:

Will our IT staff let us know the migration schedule for our agency? ("When will it happen to me?")

Yes, contact your IT Manager for more details. Schedules will also be posted on the project web site

What can I do to get ready for the migration to the new system? How can we manage the excess mail we have now?

Review and understand the records retention schedule and rules for your agency.
Use very meaningful subject titles on your emails.
Begin to organize messages into folders with retention suffixes, and delete unwanted messages.
- Develop folders and begin managing your email.
- Delete mail not needed – personal copies, convenience copies, etc.
- Add suffixes to your folders that need to have a retention period.

Will the folders I have now need to be renamed?

The archiving system will use the names on the folders, renaming either before or after migration is ok.

Is all of the basic contact information being migrated to the new system?

Yes, all employee information is in the global information / address list - including legislature and courts, will be migrated to the new system. If you have stored personal contact information in your email system you will need to contact your departmental IT staff to find out if they will be migrating this information for you.

What about employees in other areas / rural offices – where folks are working at other agencies outside the agency network (i.e. located at University of Alaska office building?)

All employees with "state.ak.us" addresses will be migrated to the new system.

What is going to happen during the transition?

During transition to the new email and archiving system some of the archiving rules will be suspended. The 90 day rule on the in-box and sent items folder will be suspended. Setting the 135 day default retention period on folders with no suffix will be suspended.

If you currently have over 300 MB of email that your department will be migrating into the new system, your emails will be "auto-archived." Auto archiving moves email messages into the archive system starting with the oldest message first, until your email store is below 270 MB. During the migration of email into the new system the 300 MB limit on mailbox size will be suspended. This way all of your email will be migrated into the new system. If you still have over 300 MB in your mailbox after your folders have been archived, additional mail in your inbox will be auto archived.

I have a 300MB limit and have 1g mail! What will happen?

The migration will move the 1st 300MB to Outlook and the oldest items will be moved to Enterprise Archive System. (See answerer above)

What will happen to my mail on my laptop or my hard drive?

If the mail is stored in a local mail storage file, your department will schedule the file to be harvested and archived into a folder named "Z Imported" in your Exchange Mailbox.

What will happen to my calendar items?

Some departments are clearing calendars and starting fresh, others are migrating calendar entries. The migration of the Enterprise Oracle calendar system will occur after all the mail is migrated – scheduled for mid July.

Will my calendar attachments be transferred too? Is that part of the 300MB limit?

Yes and yes.

How will migration happen in the remote areas? – today, we have to package up the PC and send it in!

Each department has their own migration plan (i.e. DOT has about a dozen plans because they have so many remote locations).

E. Technical Q&A:

How will autonomous agency domains be handled?

They are part of Departments in which they are located; unique migrations will be handled on agency basis; contact your Department IT Manager and TAG representative for coordination and more information.

Will POP services be available with the new system?

Yes. POP is an option that your departmental administrator can select. They should set up POP accounts to leave a copy of the Email on the server.

How many Archive servers will there be?

Three – in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau.

Will this new system increase or impact network activity?

Yes, in some places network activity will increase in other locations network activity may decrease. For this project we have conducted testing and have requested network upgrades to minimize the overall network impact. In some outlying locations we are suggesting the use of Outlook Web Access (OWA).

F. Future enhancements ...

Can SharePoint be used on our intranet? We have purchased SharePoint for our office.

Yes. SharePoint 2007 can be either "intranet" or "extranet".

When are we buying in to these "future" packages, such as SharePoint or the Unified Communications Desk?

These are the future, yet to come, but probably at least two years out.