PROGRESS REPORT

12 July to 19 August 2003 (Summary)

Project Update

Project plan
The Project is unlikely to meet the revised “go live” date of 1 September 2003. However, the project is progressing in the right direction albeit not as quickly as estimated. Holidays in August have hindered progress with members of the Project Team at Guildford as well as staff at PVS and NIAB being away. There have been issues with testing of the payment engine (due to ASD, York not providing necessary information) and this has set back progress by two to three weeks.

System and User testing
System testing began on 7 July 2003 and took around three weeks to complete. User testing began on Wednesday 6 August 2003.

After some initial data transfer issues, testing began nearly to schedule. It was soon evident that insufficient staff resource had been allocated to fulfil the testing effectively. NIAB were made aware and extra staff were quickly brought in to assist Tony Dias who had been taking a lead in this area. The Cert 7, 7Summ and Cert 10s have been now been fully completed. The testing of the Cert 10 has been very thorough as different variations of this form are required for different crop groups. Over 60 UTIRS (User Testing Incident Reports), however, have been raised and they require fixing by ITD and then re-testing by Users. A new electronic reporting system that ITD were able to develop has been saving all parties considerable administrative time. PVS have been assisting NIAB in raising the UTIRS with Guildford. All UTIRS appear to be related to business issues which suggests that the System testing has been successful in sifting the appropriate errors. I anticipate that user acceptance testing will continue for at least a further week (until 29 August 2003).

Of the problems that have been raised some are as a result of the new paper forms having been finalised after the specification was signed off. These are, therefore, change management issues and will result in extra cost to the project. Delta are identifying changes to specification and marking these accordingly. Other issues have required User decisions to be taken and some of these have taken longer than anticipated to resolve owing to holidays and other pressures of work.

It should be noted that Seed Certification (SC) staff at NIAB have also had to relocate offices during August as well as complete testing on COSSACs and ESP. This has undoubtedly placed pressure and disruption on SC Users.
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Payment Engine testing
There have been issues with being able to test this new functionality at Guildford and the OeE. In order to start testing, ASD (Finance Division) have to provide us with a Merchant Acquirer ID which they need to obtain from Barclays bank. A recent communication from ASD suggests that it may be a further two weeks before an ID is issued. In effect, it means that we will be unable to “go live” with payment functionality on 1 September 2003.

Technical update
The engineer spent two days at NIAB trying to install and configure the DIS Lite box at the end of July. He will be returning on 22 August 2003 to try and complete the work. There have been some issues with the original schemas that were produced by ITD. A technical meeting was held on 24 July 2003. Issues with Cert 10 and Cert 7 schemas have been identified and some changes will have to be made and the schemas re-issued to partners.

XML server is up and running at Guildford and ready to receive Cert 4, 7, 7 Summ and 10 data. NIAB is working on writing code to transfer data from the XML server to COSSACs.

Seed Cert Regulations Project
Cert 7s backend business rules are nearly complete. The team are working on Cert 10s business functionality. NIAB have had to expand their test scenarios as errors were cropping up when different data was added.

REFLEX Analysis, development and costs
Work has been continuing on the Gazette but progress in other areas has been limited because resource on both sides (PVS and Guildford) has been diverted to Seed Certification.

Finance
I have received a final quote (DE1) for Seed Certification for work from April until 1 August 2003 from Sue Strawson for £68,882. This is in line with the amount estimated by ITD and agreed with John Kennedy when the “go live” date was set for the 1 August 2003. As the Board are aware, there has been substantially more work done in August and will continue in September in order for Phase One of Seed Certification to “go live”. This work is in addition to REFLEX analysis. A quote of £82,641 has been submitted for both Seed Certification and REFLEX until the end of September. This means that all budgeted funds for the project have been allocated to tasks and there is very little left for either Phase Two or further work on REFLEX.

Audit papers have been prepared, however, the audit has still not been carried out as planned. This needs to be done as soon as possible.

First 4 Farming – Integrated Solution
No progress has been made on this front. F4F have been awarded £300,000 from Defra for another project and it is my belief that F4F may be over
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committed at present. Neil Paton the F4F Technical Director sent a brief email to this effect.

Helpdesk/Customer support
Headsets have been bought. Nick Grayston has developed an Access database to hold information on calls. He is coming up to PVS to make enhancements and tailor the systems to requirements. The Gateway team has come to Cambridge and trained a number of Operations staff in Gateway Helpdesk facilities.

Industrial Partners and Phase One of Seed Certification
Nathan has contacted all partners. General response was quite good. Some in house suppliers, were progressing well and wanting to send test data. They are keen to see the system and use it although now the busy season has started it is unknown how many will be prepared to submit data using the new system. I have informed all partners of progress and that we will be Registering and Enrolling them for the Government Gateway from 1 September 2003. This will ease the load for partners at a busy time of year for the Industry.

Planned activities for the coming month

(i) Finish User Acceptance and End to End testing;

(ii) Progress the detailed analysis of REFLEX;

(iii) Draft User Guide for the new system;

(iv) “Go live “ with the system and R& E Industrial partners;

(v) Complete work on the NIAB’s Seed Certification database and test messages.