

Talking points for Meeting with Jay Waite, November 29, 2007

Background:

- Prepared for Jay to present MITRE opinion on the state of FDCA
- MITRE conducted an assessment of FDCA and has recently been more involved with the FDCA PMO and requirements development.
- This has given us a greater degree of insight than we had during the initial year of the program, but we still do not have much insight into the inner workings of Harris or the relationship between Harris and the FDCA PMO
- This paper identifies significant risks and provides some comments on causes of the risks
- The following points are areas we believe are major risks

Risk Areas

1. **Schedule:** There is not a baselined schedule for 2010 that is integrated with Harris' schedule (verified at yesterday's FDCA PMR)
 - There may be significant disconnects between when Census needs deliverables (software and hardware) and Harris' anticipated schedule
 - There were "surprises" for DR over when FLD needed product and when Harris thought they would deliver it
 - Schedule not effectively being used as a management tool

Recommendation: Baseline the 2010 schedule with contractor schedules integrated, and update weekly. This will determine what can be developed and tested in the remaining time. Money cannot trump time remaining.

2. **Requirements:** The primary key to success
 - Requirements have not been finalized, milestone schedule has been developed by DMD
 - People not sure of what Harris is designing against, and what the deliverables will be
 - Needed for revised cost estimate of contract (IBR is planned for April)
 - Not sure if the set of requirements is feasible with remaining schedule

Recommendation: Appoint one empowered person to ruthlessly implement milestone schedule. FDCA will fail if requirements management is not brought under control.

3. **Testing and Acceptance**
 - Not sure of Harris' plan for testing and acceptance by Census Bureau personnel
 - Decrease in the number of operations being conducted for Dress Rehearsal increases the need for subsequent end-to-end testing – as much as schedule will allow
 - Not sure of the impacts on costs for end-to-end testing before 2010
 - HHC performance is a known risk with high impact

Recommendation: Finalize plan for acceptance and end-to-end testing, identify resources needed to execute the plan. Testing must be highlighted in integrated schedule, and not decreased to save time and money.

4. **Contract Costs** (final estimate difficult to determine)
 - ECPs received through Increment 5, Increments 6 and 7 depend on defined requirements
 - Impact of ECP changes on FY08 is significant, FY08 is the critical year for software development
 - Possibility of higher HHC unit costs than originally proposed
 - Unknown costs for additional testing and improvement in help desk operations and HHC performance (if needed)

Recommendation: Finalize requirements to provide basis for estimation of remaining costs

Causes

1. Governance Process

- Lack of implementation of clearly defined processes
- No clear line of authority for decision making
- Lack of teamwork/communications

Recommendation: Implement more streamlined management review and control process, get a set of personnel engaged that will function as a team.

2. Personnel

- FDCA lacks a leader with the experience, stature, and passion to make FDCA successful
- The Census Bureau has a lack of personnel with large scale IT program management experience.

Bottom line: FDCA is in serious trouble. It is not clear that the system will meet Census' operational needs and quality goals. The final cost is unpredictable. Immediate, significant changes are required to rescue the program. However, the risks are so large considering the available time that we recommend immediate development of contingency plans to revert to paper operations.