

**Effort Reporting System Management Group**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**October 7, 2004 - Revised , 2004 - Accepted , 2004**

In attendance were: Sue Abeles, Mike Allred, John Ellis, Jon Good, Bruce Irvine, Joyce Freedman, Jorge Ohy, Pixie Ogren, and Karen Rust. Dan Gilbreath attended for Don Larson. Eric Vermillion joined the meeting by phone.

**Discussion Topics:**

Review and Acceptance of Meeting Notes: The notes for the meeting of September 16, 2004 were accepted.

Project Status Update:

Jon Good handed out an updated project schedule and reported that it is also available on the web site. Jon reported that although some individual items may be a little behind the schedule, progress continues to be made on many items, with the result that the overall project is on target with no delays expected. Jon considers the project completion date to be an immovable date and the technical effort is being managed to that date.

Update on Requirements Group Progress

Pixie reported that the group continues to make progress in refining requirements and agreeing upon system approaches. Pixie reported on several issues raised by the Requirements Group and asked for Management Group opinions/decisions.

- Possibility of including a separate table and user interface within ERS to allow for key entry of cost sharing commitments by campuses in the event that campuses do not have that information available in other local systems - In general, the Management Group was not in favor of increasing the scope of the project to include a separate table and user interface for entering cost sharing commitments into ERS especially since the Requirements Document specifically considered and excluded this functionality from the project scope. The group members were reluctant to broaden the scope of the project for what is probably a short term solution, given campus efforts to develop systems that will contain cost sharing commitment information. Management Group members will check the status of these system developments for their own campus in order to determine when cost sharing commitment data will be available to be imported into ERS. Even if a campus does not have a cost sharing system from which to do a data feed, it will be possible for individual PI's and others certifying effort to input cost sharing effort on their individual PAR in ERS. Campuses could chose to have departmental administrators input cost sharing before PARs are routed for certification.
- Above and Below the Line Certifications - The question posed by the Requirements Group: Even though only the specific sponsored projects above the line require certification, isn't the certifier certifying the entire report including the below the line? The Management Group agreed that the entire report is being certified since all percents of effort are percentages of the whole. Although the Management Group felt that the certification applied to the entire report, they also concluded that changes only to below the line entries would not require re-certification, although depending on the nature of the changes a transfer of payroll expense may still need to be generated by the department.

- Stipend payments - Do stipend payments need to be included in ERS? The Management Group concluded that stipends and fellowships are training grants and do not need to be included in ERS.
- Distribution of Cost Sharing Offsets - Can we have the system assign the offsets based on an assigned order or proration? The group concluded that it is not appropriate to have the system assign the offset. The general opinion was that someone, either the certifier or the reviewer, should know where the offset belongs and could enter it. Upon further discussion it was decided that rather than list each individual "FAU" in the below the line sections, functional categories such as Instruction and Departmental Research, Other Sponsored Projects, Departmental Administration, etc would be created. The system will not allow the entry of cost sharing offset against other sponsored projects.

Sue asked whether there were any outstanding policy issues that would have an impact on system design. Pixie said that although we have outstanding policy issues she believes that the remaining ones won't affect system design. Pixie will review the original list of identified policy issues to determine if any need to be addressed immediately.

Jorge raised the question of whether or not we want to issue effort reports for all PI's as had been decided earlier. Jorge pointed out that doing so would mean that effort reports would be issued even though the PI was not paid from, or contributing any cost sharing effort on any funds, i.e. federal, federal flow-through, or other identified funds, requiring certification. Since it was agreed earlier that effort reports would be issued only when funds requiring certification (either for direct charges or cost sharing) were present, the group concluded that rather than using a list of PI's to generate effort reports for employees who had not been paid from federal or federal flow-through funds, but who may need to report cost sharing effort, it would be better to use a list of those who had an award with cost sharing commitments on funds requiring certification.

Sue raised a question concerning the importance of consistency across campuses in the reporting period to be used. The conclusion was that campuses do not all need to use their academic term as the reporting period. Each campus could determine what worked best for them and would be responsible for clearing any changes with the cognizant agency. Sue will elaborate on this responsibility in the Policy White Paper.

San Diego reported that they considered the inclusion of cost sharing information in ERS to be optional by each campus. It is their position that they do not intend to use the Effort Reporting System to certify cost shared effort and would like the ERS system to be designed in such a way that the cost sharing "can be turned off" so that it doesn't show on the effort reports. They intend to continue to reporting and certifying cost sharing at the time required by each individual project and not as part of the ongoing effort reporting. The group felt that cost sharing effort was an important component of effort reporting and members were reluctant to design the system in such a way to enable this portion of the ERS to be turned off. Don Larson was not present at the meeting but his views were represented by Dan Gilbreath. Sue and Mike will schedule a time to call Don Larson to discuss this further.

#### Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for October 28.