



# DEAMS brings array of benefits to ops environment

By Dave Thurston

DEAMS Strategic Communications

Everyone associated with the Defense Enterprise Accounting and Management System knows there must be big changes to Air Force financial management for the future core accounting system to provide the expected benefits. The main purpose of those changes is to achieve compliance with statutory requirements driven by internal controls and improvements in our business processes and the manner in which resources are managed.

What may not be so well known is the wide array of tangible benefits DEAMS brings to the operational environment. Those benefits can be viewed in four distinct categories: audit readiness, day-to-day financial management, decision support, and the way DEAMS affects individual Airmen.

## Achieving Audit Readiness

There are specific laws and regulations requiring Defense Department agencies, including the Air Force, to achieve audit readiness by Sept. 30, 2017. Soon after assuming office, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta said, "While the Department's systems do tell us where we are spending taxpayer funds, we do not yet have the details and controls necessary to pass an audit. This is inexcusable and must change."

Since that statement, he has articulated an even more aggressive goal of partial audit readiness by 2014 and a proposed amendment to the 2012 Defense authorization bill may soon elevate Panetta's goal into law.

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The only practical way to comply with federal laws and regulations is to fully implement an effective DEAMS program as quickly as possible. Doing so will allow the Air Force to use the new Standard Financial Information Structure, which provides the common financial management language needed for systems to accurately exchange information. That, in turn, will support timely analysis of financial events, provide unqualified assurances on internal controls, permit agile response to statutory, regulatory and policy changes and, ultimately, enable clean audit opinions. The end result will be compliance with all of the relevant laws, regulations and policies that ensure fiscal responsibility within the department.

## ***Strengthening Financial Management***

Day-to-day financial management in the Defense Department consists of thousands of transactions that must be initiated, approved, funded, tracked and reported in a wide array of legacy systems. Most of those systems are outdated and incapable of compliant traceability of the end-to-end process

supported by individual transactions. Replacing these poorly aligned legacy systems with DEAMS enables a single-entry, transaction-based general ledger in which information is entered once and used throughout the life of a transaction. Doing so will vastly improve accuracy and the visibility of transactions, enhance budget processes and controls, and provide robust detail for cost accounting, estimating and reporting. The inherent requirement to match budget to expenditures will minimize the potential for Anti-Deficiency Act violations.

DEAMS will also improve the visibility of system and program costs, and facilitate efficiency by highlighting those cost drivers while linking execution to the president's budget. With the ability to generate better financial statements, DEAMS will aid more consistent financial reporting by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. It will also enhance Property, Plant and Equipment accounting and ultimately ensure vastly improved fiscal stewardship.

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***“While the Department’s systems do tell us where we are spending taxpayer funds, we do not yet have the details and controls necessary to pass an audit. This is inexcusable and must change.”***

**Leon Panetta**  
**Secretary of Defense**

## **Enhancing Decision Support**

Effective leadership of any enterprise depends on the ability to make good decisions, but those decisions are only as good as the information available to the decision maker. In today's fast-paced environment, the information available from legacy systems is often less than sufficiently reliable, timely or accurate for commanders and other senior leaders to make fully confident mission decisions. By using centralized data management, data integrity and the fidelity of details needed for analysis are more readily available at operational levels. It provides decision makers with total cost information alternatives and facilitates an effective cost culture Air Force wide. Similar to the effect of achieving audit readiness, DEAMS enhances the overall standing of financial managers in the Defense Department, helping them to be recognized as serving an invaluable role in leadership support.

## **Supporting Airmen**

DEAMS supports Airmen at every level by providing new, vastly more effective tools for financial management. It mitigates long-standing Air Force materiel weaknesses by applying strong controls on accounting procedures and allowing centralized guidance and enforcement of those controls. DEAMS distributes controlling budget authority to supervisors and approving officials at the lowest level; the resulting improvement to visibility and fidelity reduces the chance of Anti-Deficiency Act violations.

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It checks budget availability and automatically reserves budget as an inherent part of every transaction and then enables rapid queries to track transactions.

DEAMS is designed to achieve financial management compliance. It requires organizational and operational change within the financial management community as well as other functional areas that use or supply financial data to support their end-to-end processes. A primary objective of this modern account capability is to drive sound and efficient business practices. Using a single, direct-entry system that validates data at the source whenever possible eliminates the need to rework transactions. DEAMS also contributes to environmental stewardship and efficiency by eliminating most legacy paper forms.

The overall impact of DEAMS on the operational environment will be better appreciated as it becomes further implemented and integrated into the Air Force financial management community. Benefits to everyone from taxpayers to commanders and financial managers will be fully realized. This ultimately means improved credibility with greater appreciation for the financial management community's contributions to management of sound business practices in support of our national defense programs.

# Original DEAMS member retires at month's end

Leon Hunton has served almost 35 years of combined Navy and civil service time – 8 with DEAMS

*By Cathy Segal  
DEAMS Strategic Communications*

When Leon Hunton started working for U.S. Transportation Command headquarters at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., as a systems accountant for a new financial management modernization project, the project didn't have a name and hadn't been approved.

But since that day in July 2003, Hunton has seen the concept grow into what is now called the Defense Enterprise Accounting and Management System. DEAMS is an Enterprise Resource Planning system that has been implemented at Scott AFB and is scheduled to roll out to McConnell AFB, Kan., within the next six months.

By the end of fiscal year 2017, the rest of the Air Force and TRANSCOM's Army component will receive the industry-proven Oracle® software to process

commitment accounting; general accounting; project accounting; revenue and billing; property, plant and equipment; and timekeeping.



**Leon Hunton**

The Air Force, TRANSCOM and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service are partners in developing and implementing DEAMS, which also provides a fully auditable system that meets statutory requirements.

Hunton, however, will be watching future rollouts from the sidelines as he draws nearly 35 years of federal service to a close. He is retiring on Dec. 31 after serving almost six years as a cryptologic technician in the Navy and more than 29 years as a Department of Defense civil servant.

After separating from the Navy in 1976, earning a bachelor's degree in accounting and co-partnering a glass business in Trenton, Mo., in

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1982 Hunton was accepted into an intern program with the U.S. Army Aviation and Troop Support Command, a major subordinate of the Army Materiel Command, in St. Louis. He followed the internship with a permanent position until 1993, serving as a staff accountant and systems accountant developing, designing and testing new systems or modifying existing ones – skills that would later prove valuable to the DEAMS program.

In April 1993, Hunton began what would be a 10-year assignment with DFAS in St. Louis as a supervisory staff accountant, systems accountant and supervisory systems accountant supporting Army Materiel Command's supply management, maintenance and acquisition communities.

As one of just a handful of people assigned in July 2003 to this new, unnamed, unapproved project to modernize financial management, Hunton was assigned to the expense team to develop process flows. Later, he led the interface team in documenting requirements for 70 interfaces to DEAMS and coordinating another 110 interface requirements with 53 external systems. He also led integrated process teams, developed test scenarios to evaluate the Oracle software to meet technical requirements and led the DEAMS Functional Test Team, which included reviewing and prioritizing trouble tickets reported to the help desk. His team also tested more than 200

software patches developed in response to reported problems.

Originally from Phoenix, Hunton, 62, who started a paper route at age 10 and more gainful employment at 15, will retire in Missouri with his wife of 32 years and “no intention of going to work anywhere,” he said. Travel, household chores and volunteering will replace testing, patches and interfaces.

With a retirement ceremony only days away on Dec. 21, Hunton doesn't think he can transition so easily.

“For a while, I am going to miss the daily grind, but that will fade,” he said. “But I will truly miss the people. We've got a great group,” among which he counts users at Scott AFB and colleagues at the DEAMS Program Management Office at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; DFAS; and programmers at Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Ala.

He's also not ready to leave without imparting a few words of encouragement and wisdom.

“Remember that when things get frustrating it takes a while to get a (commercial off-the-shelf package) to work, but it will come along,” he said. “Keep striving to make DEAMS the system it needs to be to support the Air Force and U.S. Transportation Command. I expect good things out of this program.”



## Community support

**Jessica Arnett, DEAMS Program Management Support, unpacks some of the nonperishable food items donated by the DEAMS Functional Management Office staff to the O'Fallon (Ill.) Community Food Pantry. The donations join those of several organizations that collect food and money for those less fortunate during the holiday season.**

*The O'Fallon Community Food Pantry is grateful to the Defense Enterprise Accounting and Management System staff for donating 56 cans and 18 boxes of food, five bags of cereal, four drinks and \$100.*

*Your donation will be used to help us serve the needy families in our area. We appreciate your generosity and interest in being a part of the caring hands in our community.*

*Nov. 28, 2011*

# DEAMS Transitions

## Arriving

### Tye Brown

Ernst & Young  
Compliance

### Jennifer Deen

Ernst & Young  
Requirements Analysis

### Jan Kravcheno

Kearney & Company  
Project Accounting

### Fred Lee

Booz Allen Hamilton  
Change Management

## Departing

### Lori Castillo

Booz Allen Hamilton  
Strategic Communications

### Andrew Resnick

Ernst & Young  
Data Structure

## Quotable

*“Auditability is a goal that every commander, every manager, and every functional specialist must understand and embrace to improve efficiency and accountability at the DOD.”*

Leon Panetta  
Secretary of Defense



DOD photo

*“We need to transition to a modern financial system that is audit compliant, and getting DEAMS fully functional and deployed is our solution.”*

Dr. Jamie Morin,  
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for  
Financial Management and Comptroller



USAF photo

# DEAMS Outreach

Do you have an upcoming event? Regional conference? Mini-PDI?

DEAMS speakers are available to update your group on the current status of DEAMS as well as

the way ahead.

Contact the DEAMS Functional Management Office at (618) 622-5700 or via email at [ustc-deams@ustranscom.mil](mailto:ustc-deams@ustranscom.mil).

**DEAMS**  
Defense Enterprise Accounting and Management System

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## Financial Management - At Your Fingertips

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DEAMS is a financial management initiative that will transform business and financial management processes and systems to provide accurate, reliable, and timely business information to support effective business decision making for U.S. Transportation Command, Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), and the U.S. Air Force.

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Questions about Web content may be addressed by email to: [ustc-deams@ustranscom.mil](mailto:ustc-deams@ustranscom.mil)



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**1-877-332-6753**  
**(1-877-DEAMS-LE)**

## **DEAMS**

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All photos by the *Current Account* staff unless otherwise noted.