

DEAMS

Current Account

Financial Management at Your Fingertips

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AFOTEC to retest key assessment areas

Air Force and DEAMS leaders have identified areas in which improvements had been made since the assessment began. AFOTEC agreed to work with Air Force and DEAMS leaders to understand the differences and retest specific items. Appropriate updates will be added to the final report.

*By Cathy Segal
DEAMS Strategic Communications*

The Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center concluded its assessment of the Defense Enterprise and Accounting System but has agreed to retest certain areas as a result of improvements made since the assessment. The final report with updates will be submitted to the Defense Department's Deputy Chief Management Officer for consideration in a limited fielding decision of DEAMS.

The operational assessment took place May 30-June 15 to measure progress toward operational effectiveness, suitability, mission capability, and readiness for operational test and evaluation.

The original assessment report, dated Aug. 16, cited a number of DEAMS areas that did not meet established key performance parameters. However, the aggressive DEAMS patching schedule has fixed or improved several of those areas, which could impact a fielding decision.

Air Force and DEAMS leaders have identified those improvements and will present them to AFOTEC during a meeting in the first week of September. All parties have agreed to work together to understand the differences; AFOTEC will retest specific items and provide updates to the final report.

"Despite our differences of opinion as to the status of the program, the original report was helpful in identifying how we can better track and report system capabilities and its status," said Randy Newcome, Air Force Functional Manager for DEAMS.

Key to the program's success will be to close fiscal years 2010, 2011 and 2012 with all journal vouchers as well as planned code changes and current production data. The final end-of-year testing is being completed with help from Defense Finance and Accounting Service partners. This event will be a critical component of the input to the limited fielding decision.

Understanding DEAMS performance

By Dave Thurston
DEAMS Strategic Communications

“DEAMS is slow. What’s going on?”

That is a question that Defense Enterprise Accounting and Management System users frequently ask. This short article will help explain factors affecting DEAMS performance and how users can contribute to improving it, and what the corporate Air Force is doing about it.

DEAMS users have communicated clearly that system performance needs to improve. System slowness can be manifested by many sources, some very technical and some not. At times, the application itself is poorly built or has inefficient database design that cause poor code execution. Over the past two years, the DEAMS systems performance and engineering team “tuned” the system for efficient execution. In a parallel effort, significant data was collected on the performance of the network over which DEAMS traffic is traversed with the solid conclusion that the network architecture was not adequate and caused unnecessary latency.

The performance of information technology applications, such as DEAMS, which use a shared wide area network to communicate between user and the core centralized infrastructure, is heavily impacted by the efficiency and security controls of the owners of that network. Users of those applications which ride on an inefficient or saturated network can experience latency, which essentially makes the user less than fully productive.

The term latency refers to the amount of time, usually measured in milliseconds, it takes for data to travel from one location to another across a network, including the Internet. A high-performing network is one generally experiencing short or infrequent delays, while a network with low performance means delays are longer or more frequent.

The speed in which vast amounts of information can be obtained from the Internet has raised expectations for network performance

to a very high level. Customers want instantaneous service, and any delay leads to frustration and the perception of unacceptable system performance. DEAMS is not a network but relies on the existing Internet, Air Force and Defense Information Systems Agency network infrastructures to provide financial services to users. There is no doubt that performance issues occur in every web-based platform and DEAMS is no exception, but much of it results from factors outside of DEAMS. They include standard desktop and network security configurations, VPN (Virtual Private Network) connectivity, proxy settings, firewall rules, network platforms, Air Force Portal processes, and more.

The path DEAMS information travels is complex and starts with the network within a given building on base. Connectivity beyond the perimeter of the installation is routed onto DISA circuits carrying data for the long haul from origin to destination. Between the gateway at the installation and the hosting environment at the Defense Enterprise Computing Centers at Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base, Ala., a number of services are provided by the Global Combat Support System. Throughout the Air Force network, GCSS has inherent performance issues that experts from the Air Force Network Integration Center at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., are constantly working to improve.

DEAMS users may contribute to improving system performance by notifying the DEAMS Help Desk whenever they encounter unreasonable delays. Users are asked to provide details of the error with screen shots whenever possible. Other users may be experiencing similar issues but the extent of the problem can only be determined if everyone reports what is happening. The DEAMS Help Desk researches each situation and collaborates with other teams as needed to resolve issues as they arise.

DEAMS performance will improve over time as the system matures, network connectivity gets better and users become more familiar with the program. The combined efforts of the help desk, system engineers and users will ensure that DEAMS reaches its full potential as the Air Force’s modernized accounting platform.



Show and tell

Senior Airman Carlos Esguerra, 375th Comptroller Squadron at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., describes how to process government purchase card increases using the Defense Enterprise Accounting and Management System. Looking on are Senior Airman Moses Tum (center) and Staff Sergeant Greg Clark (right) from the 22nd CPTS at McConnell Air Force Base, Kan. DEAMS was fully implemented at Scott in May 2010 and is scheduled to deploy to McConnell in October. A group of 10 people from McConnell visited Scott Air Force Base July 31 to Aug. 2 to observe Scott users who access DEAMS to perform financial management tasks similar to what they will be doing starting in October.

Deployment Status Update

The DEAMS Deployment team is reviewing the Integrated Master Schedule for the next four Air Mobility Command bases (Grand Forks AFB, N.D.; Fairchild AFB, Wash.; Pope Field, N.C.; and Little Rock AFB, Ark.).

The first round of training at McConnell AFB, Kan., began on Aug. 6; the next round is scheduled for October. Required courses are based on the DEAMS roles that individuals requested during user registration, based on their job functions. DEAMS is scheduled to go live at McConnell in October.



Live to learn

Henry Pastorelli, an Oracle financials trainer for DEAMS, instructs a class of future DEAMS users from the 22nd and 184th Comptroller Squadrons Aug. 16 at McConnell Air Force Base, Kan. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Jose L. Leon)

DEAMS Transitions

Arriving

Eugene Kang
Ernst & Young
Compliance

Departing

Kathy Kritikos
Government
Testing

Harold Parker
Kearney & Co.
Project Accounting

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.”



DOD photo

Leon Panetta
Secretary of Defense

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



USAF photo

Dr. Jamie Morin
Acting Under Secretary of the Air Force

Visit the DEAMS public website at www.deams.af.mil

Join or observe DEAMS discussions on milSuite at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/deams>

Questions about Web content may be emailed to: ustc-deams@ustranscom.mil



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