

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

Urgent Bulletin

Department for Work and Pensions
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HB/CTB U4/2006

1 March 2006

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Who should read	All HB and CTB staff
Action	For information
Subject	Roll out plan for the RATs replacement and introduction of access to CIS

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Roll out plan for the RATS replacement and Introduction of access to CIS

Roll out plan

- 1 *HB/CTB Bulletin G2/06* gave the latest position on the project to replace the existing Remote Access Terminals (RATs) infrastructure. This work is now completed and the roll out plan is attached as an excel document. Double click on the icon below to access the information.



"Roll Out Summary.xls"

- 2 We have, wherever possible, considered the requirements of those LAs who submitted business cases for inclusion at a particular time. It will **not** be possible to make any changes to the roll out plan. We have an extremely tight window in which to introduce the new system, and changes that may impact upon the successful implementation will not be accepted.
- 3 To give LAs the opportunity to start planning for the roll out, a roll out checklist is shown at *Appendix A*. This lists all of the actions that each LA needs to take prior to their go live date identified on the roll out plan.

Workshops

- 4 We are planning a series of workshops to discuss these in detail and help LAs achieve successful roll out. This will include a handover of the training and guidance material, advice and demonstrations of actions required for roll out and the opportunity to meet the project team and discuss issues. The first of these will be held during week commencing 13 March 2006 for LAs rolling out during May. Due to the number of LAs involved, we intend to hold two workshops that week – one in the Bristol area and the other in Newcastle – to give LAs a choice about where to attend. Invitations to the events will be issued shortly to the first wave of LAs to go live. There will be a limit of two people per LA who can attend. Ideally this should include benefit managers who will be organising and determining staff roles for Customer Information Service (CIS) access.

Connectivity

- 5 The next HB/CTB General bulletin will include details on the connectivity actions required by each LA to gain access to CIS.

Northern Ireland

- 6 The Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Northern Ireland Rates Collection Agency have not been included in the roll out plan at this time. The project is in the process of arranging for a number of additional Northern Ireland sites to be given access to the replacement system. Once we have received the necessary information we will include the Northern Ireland sites in the schedule and issue a further bulletin.

Government Connect

- 7 We are working closely with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) programme – Government Connect – to identify how we can link up common infrastructure being developed by ODPM and DWP.
- 8 We hope that this will mean that where an LA takes advantage of the package of applications offered by Government Connect, it will be able to access the replacement RAT system via GCSX. Further information on Government Connect can be found at www.govconnect.gov.uk/ccm/portal/

Queries

- 9 For further advice or information please contact Wayne Norfolk
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Appendix A: Roll out checklist

- 1 The following is a list of preparation/actions that must be completed by LAs before your specified 'go live' date as detailed within the roll out plan. More detailed instructions will be issued at 8-12 weeks prior to go live.
- 2 **Note:** actions are listed by specific headings within the roll out and **not** in the order they must be completed. Although certain actions will need to be completed before others can be progressed, LAs may wish to follow different implementation plans.

Memorandum of Understanding

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) returned & signed at least 6 weeks before go live

ITIFLA Roll out material for LAs

- Training material/guidance received (to be issued approx 8-12 weeks prior to go live date)
- IT instructions, eg URLs (website address for CIS and Government Gateway) received (to be issued w/c 06/03/06)
- Government Gateway Digital Activation Token received (to be issued following MOU completion)

IT preparation

- Confirmation from LA IT section that local IT settings have been implemented to enable CIS log on screen to be accessed (GSx proxy settings for Scottish LAs, Internet firewall rule changes (if required) for English & Welsh Local Authorities)
- Testing completed to check whether all LA staff requiring access to CIS are able to access CIS log on screen via desktop PCs
- PC Desktop shortcuts/Internet Website Favourites set up with Government Gateway and CIS links, on LA desktop PCs used by LA staff requiring access to CIS
- PC Desktop shortcuts/Internet Website Favourites set up with DWP Guidance, Training & Desk aids website links, on LA desktop PCs used by LA staff requiring access to CIS
- Electronic copies of ITIFLA CIS Guidance/Training material/Desk aids saved into LA shared network

Government Gateway registration

- LAs identified/agreed Government Gateway roles (including Users, Assistants (view, update interest & ETD) and at least one Secure Print Operator)
- Initial LA Government Gateway User registers LA on Government Gateway using Digital Activation Token supplied
- LA Government Gateway Users read training\guidance material

- Registration of all Users, Assistants & Secure Print Operators (SPOs) completed by appropriate Government Gateway Users, using generic passwords for Assistants/SPOs
- Unique Government Gateway IDs and initial passwords given to Assistants/SPOs
- All Government Gateway Assistants/SPOs access Government Gateway website to
 - 1 activate account, and
 - 2 change generic password to unique password
- Clerical and electronic record of all Users, Assistants & SPOs developed (and maintained) by LA
- Government Gateway proforma (detailing LA Users, SPOs, etc) completed and returned to LAST

Training/guidance

- Preparation for training officers/setting up/agreement of training approach
- Complete training/guidance for all LA Staff who require access to CIS
- Training evaluation completed and returned to ITIFLA Project
- On completion of training and prior to access of CIS – all staff must sign a confidentiality agreement and LAs retain electronic/clerical copies

Accessing CIS via external Standard Enquiry Facility (eSEF)

- **Following completion of all of the above:** Test CIS log on – using a sample of LA Staff attempt to log on to CIS ‘Front Screen’ using their own unique password and ID
- **Do not attempt to access a customer account until the LA official go live date**

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