

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

Urgent Bulletin

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HB/CTB U11/2006

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Who should read	All HB/CTB staff
Action	For information
Subject	Customer Information System - update

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Customer Information System - update

- 1 You will be aware of the problems experienced with accessing the Customer Information System (CIS) in week commencing 17 July 2006. Since then we have been contacted by a number of LAs with concerns about ongoing access to CIS. We hope the following will explain the current position.
- 2 During that week there were some major IT issues which resulted in the majority of (Internet connected) CIS users being unable to access customer information and also obtain Electronic Transfer of Data (ETD) reports. These IT issues were resolved during the weekend of 22 & 23 July 2006 and since this time normal service has been restored and no further issues have been reported.
- 3 DWP (and the ITIFLA Project) would like to apologise for the disruption and loss of the CIS service. The project is currently awaiting a full report from our IT suppliers detailing the exact source/cause of the problems, and also investigating the process/timescales involved for communicating and resolving similar issues in the future.
- 4 This has been the only major incident since rollout of CIS commenced in May 2006 and both DWP and our IT suppliers have learnt valuable lessons which will ensure any future IT issues/disruptions are kept to a minimum and processes for resolving them are made more efficient.
- 5 The project has temporarily halted decommissioning the Remote Access Terminals (RATs) as a contingency measure in the unlikely event of a similar IT failure. We will reconsider our approach regarding the RATs when we have had the opportunity to consider the report from our suppliers.
- 6 In the meantime rollout of CIS to the remaining LAs will continue as planned. Currently more than half of all LAs are now successfully using CIS. Feedback from current users remains extremely positive and the advantages of the new system are many. The project is continually working hard to deliver CIS to LAs and formulate an easy transition from RAT usage.
- 7 We are confident the incidents of w/c 17 July 2006 are isolated ones and that appropriate lessons will be learned and we hope that LAs continue to show their support for the successful rollout of the new system.
- 8 All the customer information and ETD reports for this week are available on CIS and can be accessed and retrieved in the usual way. Advice relating to the classification of overpayments affected by the delay to the ETD process will be published in the next HB/CTB General Information Bulletin.
- 9 We would also like to take this opportunity to encourage you to have contingency plans in place to respond to such incidents should they occur in the future.
- 10 If you would like to discuss any issues relating to CIS rollout then please do not hesitate to contact the project team, see contact details at the beginning of this bulletin.

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