Frequently Asked Questions

General

What is the FI$Cal Project?

The Financial Information System for California (FI$Cal Project) is a business transformation project for state government processes in the areas of budgeting, accounting, procurement and cash management. The Project will prepare the state systems and workforce to function in an integrated financial management system environment. To ensure the success of the Project, the Partner Agencies have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the State Controller, the State Treasurer, and the Directors of the Departments of Finance and General Services. The MOU demonstrates support for the Project at the highest levels of these organizations and provides the framework for the FI$Cal Project.

Where can I obtain more information about FI$Cal?

To obtain the latest information regarding the Project's status and upcoming activities, departments can attend stakeholder meetings, such as FI$Cal Forum meetings. The FI$Cal Website, www.fiscal.ca.gov, will be regularly updated with information. If you have questions regarding FI$Cal you can contact us at fiscal.cmo@fiscal.ca.gov.

What is the structure of the FI$Cal Organization?

The FI$Cal Project has a “One Team” philosophy where employees of FI$Cal, our Partner Agencies, and Accenture work collaboratively. There are six components to the organization: Executive, Administration, Technology, Business, Change Management, and Project Management.

How was the contractor chosen?

Under Public Contract Code (PCC) §6611, the Department of General Services led an innovative two-stage procurement to select the FI$Cal System Integrator (SI). Stage 1 of the procurement qualified three (3) bidders (Accenture, CGI, and IBM) to participate in a "Fit Gap" where the State had the opportunity to share detailed information about the business and technical requirements provided in the Request for Proposal (RFP). During this time, the bidders were able to determine the "fit" of their solution to the State's requirements, and identify any "gaps" to bridge in order to fulfill the State's needs. Stage 2 of the procurement required all three bidders to submit their proposals for the design, development, and implementation of FI$Cal. The FI$Cal Project conducted a thorough review and evaluation of all three proposals based on criteria established in the RFP. Based on the evaluations, the bidder receiving the highest total score was selected as the winning bidder. The winning bidder was Accenture.

Will all state agencies be required to participate in the FI$Cal System?

California Government Code Section 15849.22 (b) (1) states, “All state departments and agencies shall use the FI$Cal System. The FI$Cal System shall replace any existing central or departmental systems duplicative of the functionality of the FI$Cal System.” The Department of Finance and the State Chief Information Office issued corresponding Budget Letter 08-05, “Moratorium on Developing Administrative IT Systems,” instructing departments and agencies that an IT project moratorium is in effect for functionality duplicating FI$Cal.

Who is going to provide Project Management Services for the team - Accenture or the State?

The Project is a collaborative team effort. FI$Cal has a State-staffed Project Management Office (PMO) that will work with Accenture's PMO team throughout the Project.

Is the FI$Cal Project Management Office (PMO) following Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK)?

Yes. The FI$Cal PMO and their Accenture counterparts are using PMBOK as well as other standards.

What role will each department have in the Project?

At the start of each wave, FI$Cal establishes Departmental Sponsorship. With Sponsorship engaged, the department is ready to establish its Change Network Structure to Support End Users. The Change Network provides governance and leadership, Project support and the structure by which departments are able to establish their internal Department Implementation Team (DIT). Through the DIT, the FI$Cal Project supports departments throughout implementation as the department participates in readiness activities related changes to business processes, technical impacts and training for the FI$Cal System End Users. Each department is actively engaged in ensuring its end users are ready for Go Live.

Have requirements already been gathered from the departments?

FI$Cal worked with departments from 2004-2005 to define the requirements. Those requirements were included in the Request for Proposal (RFP). However, FI$Cal is aware that some department requirements are yet to be identified. This is why it is important for departments to continue to participate in the design sessions to ensure all requirements are identified early and incorporated into the System.

What does my department need to do to prepare for FI$Cal?

There are many things a department can do to prepare for the FI$Cal Project. The place to start is with your Department Liaison (browse the Resources pages of our Website at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/resources/). Each participating department has designated a Department Liaison to ensure the Project addresses their needs and requirements. The Department Liaison receives Departmental Sponsorship support, serves as the conduit between the department and the FI$Cal Project and receives critical Project information to share with and help prepare your agency or department for the change to FI$Cal.

In addition to contacting your Department Liaison, the following activities will help to prepare departments for FI$Cal:

- Visit the FI$Cal Website at www.fiscal.ca.gov to learn more about the Project
- Read the monthly FI$Cal Focus Newsletters
- Attend the quarterly FI$Cal Forums to stay abreast of upcoming activities and learn how those activities will affect your department
- Participate in Business Process Reengineering (BPR) and Conference Room Pilot (CRP) sessions
- Participate in "readiness" activities as assigned by the Project
- Share information with others within the Department (usually through the Department Liaison)

You may send questions specific to your Department or Wave to the Change Management Office at fiscal.cmo@fiscal.ca.gov.

When will the Department Implementation Teams (DITs) be formed for Waves?

DITs for all other Waves will be formed about one year prior to the department's Go-Live implementation date.

Some departments are internal to other departments and use systems such as CalSTARS. How is FI$Cal addressing the needs of these "internal departments?

FI$Cal needs departments (including internal departments) to be involved and to provide information about their systems and reports. Departments will need to identify both business and technical resources that will work with FI$Cal to decipher the needs/requirements for reports and functionality and help FI$Cal understand/interpret the data in their systems.

How do I find out what wave my department is in? How were departments selected?

Departments were selected by the System Integrator (SI) based on the functionality being rolled out in that particular wave. Information regarding specific waves can be found at www.fiscal.ca.gov.

Who are the Wave 1 departments?

The Wave 1 departments can be found at www.fiscal.ca.gov.

How will the control agencies be involved?

The Department of Finance, Department of General Services, State Controller's Office, and State Treasurer's Office are deeply involved in all phases of the Project. In 2007, the control agencies signed an agreement stating their intent to be champions of the Project. Each agency has devoted staff to work on the FI$Cal Project. These agencies also sit on the Steering Committee, which acts as the approval body for key Project decisions.

Should deferred departments and agencies prepare differently?

Deferred agencies already have an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and will need to interface with FI$Cal. The statute states that all departments will participate unless they have an existing ERP system. However, when current ERP systems are decommissioned or require significant upgrades, those departments will transition to FI$Cal. Our FI$Cal Team will be contacting deferred departments regarding interfacing with FI$Cal.

For agencies that submitted their statutes, policies and procedures, when will these agencies be given an answer whether these will be incorporated into the System?

FI$Cal will incorporate the information provided during the Business Process Reengineering and Conference Room Pilot sessions during the design phase. Prior to each Wave, we will be talking to participating departments about statutes, retention, etc. FI$Cal asked for the information early so that the information could be captured and discussed during these sessions.

Will FI$Cal be user friendly?

Yes, but it will be different. While there is intuitiveness to a browser-based application, training will still be required to teach people how to use the software and processes. FI$Cal will provide training, job aids, and reference materials to equip users on how to use the new System.

Will FI$Cal's accounting system be on a cash basis or an accrual basis or will it vary among the departments?

The FI$Cal System will accommodate modified accrual, cash, budgetary/legal, and full accrual bases of accounting.

If you have made Chart of Accounts (COA) changes already, when will they be shared?

The design of the new COA is complete and is posted as *ChartField Definitions* on the Resources page of our Website at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/resources/.

Will CalSTARS be phased out? If "yes", when?

Yes; however, CalSTARS will not be phased out until all departments are using FI$Cal.

Will the client agencies of Department of General Services (DGS) - Contracted Financial Services (CFS) continue to work with/through DGS? Does DGS represent their requirements?

Client agencies will maintain the option to leverage DGS-CFS to perform their financial management activities. However, client agencies will be included in the System design and implementation phases of the Project to ensure their needs are met. This is also the case for client agencies of other departments.

Will FI$Cal be flexible to handle Zero Based Budgeting and Performance Based Budgeting?

FI$Cal has the flexibility to address Zero Based Budgeting and Performance Based Budgeting, if required by the State in the future.

Will FI$Cal change all terminology with regard to normal State accounting, budgeting, and procurement processes?

FI$Cal will not change all terminology, but some will change. A lot of the terminology is not application specific, it is industry terminology and that language should carry forward. The FI$Cal System will produce some new terminology, but we expect to come up with a smart blending so that it will make sense to your departmental end users without re-writing the software to accommodate the terminology. We will spend time ahead of the roll out introducing, defining, and putting those new terms in context so the users will know what each term means.

Will transaction forms be eliminated?

Yes, FI$Cal will auto-route approval documents.

How will employee information be set up in order to allow for Travel Expense Claim processing?

FI$Cal will not replace the California Automated Travel Expense Reimbursement System (CalATERS). CalATERS is a web-based application that allows State employees and non-State employees to process travel advance and expense reimbursement forms online via the Internet or Intranet. FI$Cal will interface with CalATERS to produce accounting transactions for posting into FI$Cal.

Are the reports/queries going to mirror our current/required annual reports to eliminate work redundancy, i.e. Cal Recycle, Small Business/Disabled Veteran's Business Enterprise (SB/DVBE), etc.?

We will have some canned reports available. In Wave 3, we will roll out enhanced business intelligence and analytic capability tools and we will ensure you have the data available to complete the reports that are necessary for your department.

Will FI$Cal have performance management ongoing?

We won't be configuring specific performance standards for each department. However, departments will have the capability to access reports and queries to attain your desired performance measures.

How will the FI$Cal System impact (State) property? (i.e. asset acquisition such as equipment, land, and intangibles, inventory, assets disposal, and identification.)

The FI$Cal Project scope includes asset accounting. Asset accounting consists of tracking all transactions related to each asset, including the ability to identify each separate asset. It includes tracking intangibles, asset disposal, and identification. It does not include inventory tracking and control.

What is the plan to store historical data and how long will FI$Cal maintain information?

The State plans, at a minimum, to meet all applicable State and federal data retention statutes.

Outreach

What communication infrastructures are in place for information sharing among stakeholders?

The FI$Cal Project is committed to ensuring the dissemination of timely and relevant communications as well as receiving input from departments throughout the lifecycle of FI$Cal. To meet this objective, the FI$Cal Change Management Office, utilizes various sources and methods to actively communicate with departments:

- The ***FI$Cal Website*** at www.fiscal.ca.gov provides general information about the Project.
- ***Department Liaisons*** have been designated within each participating agency and department and engaged as the primary point of contact to provide information and insight relative to their respective department's processes and specific requirements. Department Liaisons are part of the larger ***Department Liaison Network (DLN)*** established to provide regular two-way communication between the Project and the Department Liaisons.
- The ***Customer Impact Committee (CIC)*** provides a formal mechanism for agencies and departments to express their views and receive information from FI$Cal, provide broad input and advice to the Steering Committee, and promote effective representation of department needs during appropriate phases, waves, and stages of the Project; current CIC members can be found under Customer Impact Committee on our Website at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/about-vision/customer_impact_committee.html.
- ***FI$Cal Forums*** are held quarterly to provide updates to department staff and an awareness of upcoming activities and how those activities will affect departments. Presentations and videos from previous FI$Cal Forums are available on our Website at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/resources/fiscalforum.html.
- ***FI$Cal Focus Newsletters*** are disseminated to all Department Liaisons and posted on our Website the first business day of the month at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/resources/fiscalfocusnewsletters.html. The Newsletter provides monthly updates on key activities and milestones, important glossary terms, and information and messages from FI$Cal Leadership.
- Questions specific to your department or wave may be addressed through the ***Change Management Office*** at fiscal.cmo@fiscal.ca.gov.

Who is my Department Liaison?

Department Liaison information is posted on the Resources page of our Website at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/resources/.

How do I contact the Customer Impact Committee (CIC) to ensure my department's interests are heard? Will my Department Liaison be in touch with the CIC regarding department representatives?

Your Department Liaison may reach out to the CIC to discuss your department's interests by sending an email to the FI$Cal CMO Mailbox at fiscal.cmo@fiscal.ca.gov with the Subject line "Inquiry for Customer Impact Committee." The CMO will forward your email to the CIC Chairperson.

Can we find Forum presentations on the FI$Cal Website?

Yes, presentations and videos from previous FI$Cal Forums are available on our Website at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/resources/fiscalforum.html.

When you meet with departments, who are you talking to?

FI$Cal meets with departments throughout the lifecycle of the Project. Audiences vary depending on the meeting purpose. FI$Cal meets with directors, deputy directors, chiefs and officers of the department regarding sponsorship activities. FI$Cal's Interfaces and Conversion Team engages technology staff to discuss legacy systems, data cleansing, conversion, interfaces, and disposition of existing systems. Each department has a designated Department Liaison, which is part of the larger Department Liaison Network (DLN). FI$Cal engages the DLN through formal meetings, as well as less formal communications such as email or the Resources pages of our Website at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/resources/. Prior to the implementation of each wave, departments establish their own Department Implementation Team (DIT). FI$Cal Change Management staff meet with DIT members through regular "touch point" meetings to share information and assist departments with the transition to FI$Cal. FI$Cal engages members of the department to participate in designated Project activities. However, there may be situations where departments want to meet with a representative of FI$Cal for reasons outside of scheduled activities. These requests are normally channeled to FI$Cal through the Department Liaison or fiscal.cmo@fiscal.ca.gov.

Funding and Costs

How is California going to pay for FI$Cal?

With the approval of SPR 5, by the California Technology Agency in January 2014, the funding for FI$Cal did not change from what was established by SPR 4, approved in March 2012. SPR 4 established that the overall cost and funding split between General Fund and Special Funds for the FI$Cal Project through final implementation in Fiscal Year 16/17. The cost allocation methodology for the future maintenance and operations of the System has yet to be determined. However, once the FI$Cal System is fully implemented, usage metrics can be utilized to establish an equitable allocation of costs.

What is the total estimated cost of FI$Cal?

The total cost of the proposed solution is $617 million, including one year of maintenance and operations (through Fiscal Year 2017/18), with $213.1 million for direct payments to the System Integrator.

Will the FI$Cal System cause additional costs to each department once it's up and running?

Most departments are CalSTARS departmentsand already paying a service charge for being part of CalSTARS. We will develop a Cost Allocation Plan once we're closer to full implementation. It will likely be based on usage, similar to CalSTARS. You will be offsetting the costs paid to CalSTARS and the costs of maintaining your existing Legacy systems.

How much money does the State anticipate saving once FI$Cal is up and running?

The Project contracted Solutions West, who worked with benchmarking experts, The Hackett Group, to perform a comprehensive benchmarking study to capture data that can be compared against post implementation measurements and also provide estimates of the expected benefits and cost savings resulting from the implementation of FI$Cal. The Hackett Group estimates the expected cost savings resulting from the implementation of FI$Cal to be $415 million annually, once the System is fully implemented.

Technology

What browsers will be supported by FI$Cal?

The certified browsers for FI$Cal can be found in our FSC End-User Workstation Configuration Guide located on our Website at http://www.fiscal.ca.gov/access-fiscal/FISCal_Service_Center/index.html.

Is FI$Cal going to be a Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) or a customized system?

FI$Cal is implementing PeopleSoft and Hyperion. Lessons learned show that a customized system is costly for the State to operate and maintain. One of the Project's critical success factors is to reengineer business processes reflecting best practices inherent in the Enterprise Resource Planning solution.

FI$Cal intends to implement a vanilla system with limited customization. What type of safeguards will be in place to ensure this Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) solution will not be outdated in 5-10 years?

In order to maximize longevity of FI$Cal, the System will be built with the latest technology with minimal customization. This will allow the State to update the System over time without the need for replacement.

Will we run dual systems the first year?

The intent of FI$Cal is to retire existing legacy systems. However, to ensure a successful transition to the new System, legacy systems may run in parallel with the new FI$Cal System until FI$Cal and the department can verify the legacy system is no longer needed.

How many states have Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems?

Today 70% of the states have ERP systems or are implementing an ERP system. Some of the departments that currently have ERP systems in California are Department of Transportation, Department of Water Resources, Department of Motor Vehicles, Corrections & Rehabilitation, and the State Controller's Office.

Will departments need to buy special information technology (IT) equipment or licenses for this new System?

Licenses for the software are part of our current contract. FI$Cal will be purchasing licenses for 13,000 State employees. Our FI$Cal Tech Team will work with your department's technical liaison to validate that the equipment on your desktop is compatible with the new System. Buying new equipment for the departments is not part of the cost of the Project.

Will there be a Graphical User Interface (GUI) for desktops?

Yes, the System is a web-based application. Access to the System will be through a portal.

Which current systems will be affected and how? Some systems are old and may need to be replaced.

Since 2004, FI$Cal has been collecting information on the business systems throughout the State to determine which systems will be impacted by the ERP solution. FI$Cal is expected to replace or integrate with hundreds of legacy systems, technologies, and applications in the area of budgeting, accounting, procurement and cash management. FI$Cal will collaborate with each department and plan for the legacy system migration or integration during the Project lifecycle.

When will we know which internal systems will be absorbed and which will be interfaced? If we would like to start planning, is there a contact?

The Interfaces and Conversion Team will be reaching out to the departments well in advance of each Wave to gain a thorough understanding of the existing functionality, interfaces, and data of your legacy systems. We will collaboratively determine whether it is best to retire, replace, or interface your system. It is premature to determine which systems will go away and which will stay. All inquiries can be sent to the Change Management Office at fiscal.cmo@fiscal.ca.gov.

How do we maintain security with such accessible transparency?

The FI$Cal Project Information Security Office is collaborating with the Information Security Officers (ISO's) from the Department of Finance, Department of General Services, State Controller's Office, State Treasurer's Office, and a select group of departments with the most rigorous security requirements, to ensure that the System will adhere to industry best practices regarding security while providing ease of use and transparency to the customer.

What programming language/platform skills could I learn that would be the most valuable to your FI$Cal Software Environment. Is it PeopleSoft or Business Intelligence (BI). More importantly could I obtain training for the development of applications within this new environment?

FI$Cal will be a PeopleSoft (Oracle) and Hyperion product. There will be training for all end users and staff that directly support FI$Cal.

What is a "Permanent Interface"?

A new interface for FI$Cal that will exist in a permanent state.

What is a "Temporary Interface"?

A new interface for FI$Cal that is temporary until a specific functionality/department is deployed in future waves at which point the interface is retired.

What does "Replaced by FI$Cal Functionality" mean?

Existing Department interface functionality is replaced by a solution or component within FI$Cal.

Testing and Training

Will User Acceptance Testing (UAT) be conducted at FI$Cal or at the designated departments?

User Acceptance Testing will occur at the FI$Cal site.

Will FI$Cal provide on-site training for departments?

FI$Cal End User training will be provided using a variety of delivery methods including Instructor-Led Training (ILT) and on-line (web-based) training. As a result of the training needs analysis, ILT may be conducted in centralized locations convenient to the end-user population for that geographical region. This may include your department or another location nearby. Web-based training will also be available to every department. As the Project moves forward, FI$Cal will continue to provide timely and relevant updates about End User training through your Department Liaison, newsletters, information sessions, Website postings, and various other methods.

Where are the Training Labs going to be?

The decision has not yet been made. It will depend on the Wave and the location of the departments. We will determine the best location(s) for the user labs based on location(s) of departments in the Wave.