

NIMSS Regional System Administrators Teleconference

May 24, 2006, 11am EST

Host – Rubie Mize, NERA

1. NIMSS Update

Some minor changes have been done lately, mostly for troubleshooting problems that were brought to our attention. Most of these cases are datasets not coming out the way they should be viewed. There were also some cleaning up done on double/triple registrations.

As a follow-up to the South Dakota meeting, Pat Downer had sent the link in CRIS that should be used for the KA, SOI and FOS codes. Judy had updated the links in the Appendix E form.

There are at present 40 training CDs left: 28 with Harriet and 12 with Rubie. Nikki will send the label as an e-mail attachment so the regional associations can reproduce their own CDs if they need more copies.

Regional system administrators should make a note to inform their users that there is also a link to the training video under “Help” in NIMSS.

2. Meeting with CRIS

NRSP-1 is scheduled to have its annual meeting on June 2, at the CSREES-Waterfront Building in Washington, DC. The agenda is attached.

Rubie and Judy have been in contact with Pat Downer on possible integration of CRIS and NIMSS to automatically transfer data from NIMSS to CRIS forms AD-416/417. They are reviewing Pat’s suggestion and will share their response to the regional system administrators with a copy of Pat’s proposal.

3. ESCOP Webpage Redesign

Donna, Judy and Rubie are planning to re-design the ESCOP webpage to make it more user friendly. Also, in its current state, the information contained in the website are for internal use only. Inputs and suggestions were requested from Harriet and Nikki and these should be sent using the NIMSS system admin listserve, nimss-admin@umd.edu

Harriet suggested that the new ESCOP website should be designed so that the regional staff providing support to the ESCOP chair will be able to update the pages directly. Donna is currently tasked to be the only person who can do this and hence, has to update the ESCOP website for all the regions even if the chair is not from the Southern region. The system administrators agreed that this should be an essential feature of the new design.

Harriet will look into whether NASULGC can house the ESCOP website in their server so the four regional administrators can have access to the server. It is unlikely that the universities will allow outsiders to access their servers unless the system is designed like NIMSS. It will be ideal if a NIMSS-like system is designed wherein customized access could be built into the system. Judy will look into this.

4. Modifications to NIMSS Job Jar

NRSP Review Committee Assignments to use “pick person” method	Judy - Done
For Appendix E submissions, an additional page will be added so that users could view the completed form before submitting. They will also be given a chance to go back and edit.	In Progress
Initials/acronyms will be spelled out whenever possible for users who are not familiar with these terms.	Done
More training needed.	All System Admins - In Progress
Make sure links in the emails work.	Natalie – sometimes the work, sometimes they don’t – programmers are baffled and investigating this. In Progress
Report dates confusing – Bart agreed that this should be Oct 1 to Sept 30.	NCRA, WAAESD, and SAAESD have agreed to this change. Pending confirmation of NERA’s approval, Judy and Natalie can go ahead with this immediately.
Dropdown menus	Natalie - Completed
Often items are clicked by mistake because the menus are similar and close together. The screens often look very similar to one another. ie. Project > Draft/Edit and Participant > Draft/Edit are often confused by users.	Done
Include Submenus	Natalie - Done
Make confirmations screens more clear (“ok” – ok what?)	Done
More “how to” info on the screens	Natalie – not urgent
Create a historical list of officers and meeting locales	To be included in the project homepage.
HTML problems (tags and funny characters).	No solution at the moment except that basic html tags can be included on the sidebar or some warning that special formats need to be coded in html. In progress.
Create a “coaching section” – Help > Steps to submit forms/process	Natalie - Prompt boxes will be added, see “how to” info screens above.
Create self-teach course	Training CDs to be available soon (see above).
Judy mentioned that ARS scientists are becoming more and more involved in projects and therefore, she is going to make their user-registration more specific: USDA > ARS Region > Participant State	In Progress

5. NIMSS Oversight Committee Meeting

We will revisit this after the NRSP-1 meeting on June 2. Right now there are no pressing issues or policies that are needed to be brought to the Oversight Committee’s attention. However, there are additional tasks for NIMSS that may come out from the NRSP-1 meeting which will necessitate the Oversight Committee’s endorsement or guidance.

6. Next Meeting

Donna will host the next meeting on June 27, 2-3pm Eastern

Attachment 1
National Research Support Project – 1
Research Planning Using the Current Research Information System
Technical Committee Meeting

USDA Waterfront Center
Room 4103
June 2, 2006
9:00 am – 3:00 pm

AGENDA

NRSP 1 Overview – Dennis Unglesbee

- History – Past, Present and Future
- Why is there Hatch support for NRSP 1?

CRIS Overview – Dennis Unglesbee

- CRIS reorganization
- Purpose
- Use by USDA
- Use by AES Scientists and Administrators
- Discussion of proposed changes to improve accessibility, usefulness, etc

NIMSS Overview – Rubie Mize and Tom Fretz

- Purpose and function
- Use patterns

Integration of CRIS and NIMSS - Rubie Mize and Tom Fretz

- Can we reduce redundancy
- What forms can be integrated?

Budgets for CRIS and NIMSS – Dennis Unglesbee

- Funding sources
- Expenditures

Extension CRIS reporting

- When will this be mandated?
- Why is this being implemented?
- Will extension contribute to the cost of the system?

What and how do we report back to the Directors on NRSP 1?

Other items for discussion