



The General Funds Enterprise Business System (GFEBS) Commencement Address



By Ms Kristyn E. Jones

As I pondered the right comments to make on the eve of the final General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBS) deployments, I couldn't decide if "Thank You" or "Congratulations" was the more appropriate sentiment. I determined that both were equally applicable. So, "Thank You" to the users and the supervisors. To the development teams and deployment teams. To those who spent weekends fixing errors and those who worked late nights enhancing the system. All of you have played a vital role in the Army's implementation of GFEBS.

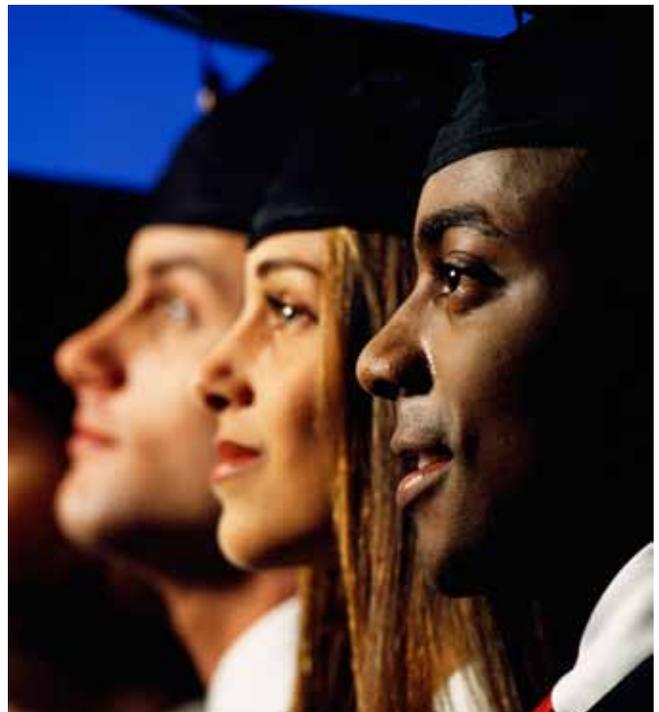
But, "Congratulations" are also in order. What you have accomplished is unprecedented in the Department of Defense and a truly historic achievement. For those of you still climbing out of or about to enter the infamous "Valley of Despair," it may seem almost laughable to associate the word success with GFEBS. But we shall, as this is a one-in-a-lifetime transformation that you are enabling. Hyperbole? Perhaps we may think so, but not others. The poet Emily Dickinson explained, "Success is counted sweetest / By those who ne'er succeed." In the midst of Intermediate Document (IDoc) errors and other challenges it may be hard to realize all you have accomplished. But to those who have tried and failed to modernize

and standardize their systems and processes, you are exceptional. The ones who prove it can be done. And I am honored to have been your partner throughout this extraordinary journey.

"IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT..."

With GFEBS, the Army has gone from hundreds of standalone systems to an integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution that complies with numerous statutory and regulatory requirements and standards. This integrated ERP solution will enable the Army to avoid operating expenses for maintaining, updating and training on all those legacy systems. We are poised to support both a Statement of Budgetary Resources (SBR) audit assertion in Fiscal Year 2014, as directed by the Secretary of Defense and fully auditable financial statements by 2017. Times have changed ... for good.

The development of GFEBS is complete and the deployments are almost over. We have fielded the required capabilities to replace our decades old systems, STANFINS and SOMARDS, with a powerful, enterprise-wide capability that will endure for many years. Using the capabilities of the system we have enabled many "firsts" within the Department of Defense and Army-wide.





GFEBs IS FIRST ERP IN DOD TO ...

- Deploy to regional Unified Combatant Commands;
 - Enable real property management at Joint Bases;
 - Process Foreign National payroll;
 - Disburse vendor funds directly through Treasury (pilot capability);
- and
- Integrate with Medical Logistics.

GFEBs is first Army-wide system to ...

- Utilize a commercial-off-the-shelf ERP technology;
- Consolidate financial management capability for General Fund;
- Be compliant with Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA) and DoD Standard Financial Information Structure (SFIS); and
- Provide cost accounting and management capability.

GFEBs is operational today on the desks of over 45,000 users at nineteen commands and over 200 locations worldwide. We'll add about 7,000 more users in July to complete the Army-wide implementation. The pace of this deployment was unprecedented and the scale is staggering. Some numbers that exemplify this magnitude:

1,650 funds centers

57,000 cost centers

71 countries

475,000 Computer Based courses conducted; 4,500 classroom training sessions provided

\$100 billion obligated through FY12

GFEBs was only able to attain such statistics through the dedication and hard work of users, supervisors, training coordinators, Change Management Deployment (CMD) Network members, and the thousands of others who pulled together to make GFEBs a reality.

“WE’VE ONLY JUST BEGUN....”

Similar to the high school and college graduations that are generally known as “commencements,” the GFEBs program is having its own graduation as we complete years of development and deployment and transition into sustainment. But this is not a time of stagnation; on the contrary, the word commence means “to begin.” Like a graduate eagerly awaiting his first paycheck, we’ll enter a period of benefits realization, the payoff for all of our past efforts. But we can’t relax and rest, as some of the hardest work is yet to come. Achieving the benefits envisioned by the Army will require an additional focus on such areas as system enhancements, audit readiness, system migration, cost management, and institutionalizing our transformation.

System enhancements. While the development efforts associated with GFEBs are done, there is still much to do to enable the system to perform optimally. Two key system enhancements underway include the Human Resource mini-master capability that will reduce system errors while improving reporting for civilian payroll, and the new miscellaneous pay process that will significantly reduce manual efforts by the Army and DFAS and enable more efficient, automated payments. Efforts to improve

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project management capabilities within GFEBS come to fruition this year and will enable GFEBS to subsume the functionality of many standalone project management systems used throughout the Army. Business Intelligence (BI) continues to evolve in providing more useful reporting capabilities. Recently released BI web services capabilities enable GFEBS data to be shared with other systems. The next BI Release will focus on improved reports for accounts receivable and accounts payable processes. These and many other system enhancements were identified and prioritized by the Functional Governance Board (FGB). This Board meets monthly to evaluate current operational performance and make decisions on functionality to be included in GFEBS. Each Process Owner and each Command participates on the Board to ensure the capabilities added to GFEBS hit the mark in providing improved functionality to the user community.

Audit readiness preparation. GFEBS had already been declared “substantially compliant” with Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA) requirements and is awaiting a final report from the Army Audit Agency (AAA) on the remaining requirements. The project is also improving controls and procedures to meet Federal systems standards, including the Federal Information Systems Management Act (FISMA) requirements. The Army is utilizing GAO’s Federal Information System Controls Audit Manual (FISCAM) to assess GFEBS’ audit readiness, to include items such as physical security of the data center, logical security of application access, validation of converted data, segregation of duties, provisioning, and system configuration controls. Some of the results of these efforts will impact users through user role re-validation processes and new segregation of duty risks to be remediated. These efforts provide the foundation for GFEBS to meet its audit readiness requirements. The program will undergo an examination by an Independent Public Accounting firm beginning in 2012. The examination is a major interim milestone for the Army on the path to achieving an auditable Statement of Budgetary Resources in FY 2014.

System Migration. A key aspect of GFEBS’ benefits realization is the elimination of the very expensive, very complicated legacy systems environment. GFEBS will subsume all or part of over 100 systems, with 20 migrating in 2012 alone. To realize these benefits and shut down these legacy systems we must ensure access to critical data is preserved and all required functionality is inherent in the GFEBS solution. Due to the acceleration of the SBR audit readiness timeline, the Army plans to terminate all use of legacy systems no later than 2014. This accelerated date will require additional focus by all commands on data cleansing, joint reviews, and contract migration. This accelerated schedule will not only

better position the Army for the SBR audit, but will also save nearly a hundred million dollars in system costs.

Cost Management. Commensurate with the completion of the GFEBS deployments, the Army will have also enabled another significant achievement—the creation of an enterprise-wide cost model that encompasses the Army’s organizations, products, services, and projects. With this basis for cost accounting in place, the Army will be able to leverage the GFEBS cost capabilities to support improved decision-making. This will play out in a variety of ways—from an improved ability to plan for future funding requirements, to better modeling of OPTEMPO and Base Operations costs, a greater understanding of the impact customer behavior has on cost consumption, and a number of other “what-if” scenarios. The development of cost management as a core competency in the Army will continue to progress, requiring further evolution of cost training, reporting capabilities, and decision making processes to support the Army’s maturation toward a “cost culture.”

Institutionalizing our Transformation. A system, even one as large and complex as GFEBS, is only a tool in enabling transformation. True transformation requires a holistic assessment to ensure people and processes are synchronized with the system change. In the Army lexicon this view is known as “DOTMLPF” Efforts are underway to examine the impact GFEBS has on both civilian and military force structure; doctrine is changing as Financial Management formations become GFEBS-enabled; training is beginning to reflect the discipline that is required by statute and is now enabled by our new systems. Leaders must begin to ask different questions and track new metrics so they can use the capabilities of the system to monitor performance and make better decisions. All these factors must work together to achieve the intended goals of GFEBS.

“LET’S STAY TOGETHER...”

This is not the end of the story. To quote Sir Winston Churchill, “It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.” And the path to further success requires continued communication and teamwork. Governance forums, refresher training, CMD network meetings, on-line resources and a variety of tools will continue to be available to help Commands move from crawl, to, walk, to run as they progress with GFEBS.

To conclude, I want to thank you for your hard work in implementing GFEBS. I hope that you all take a moment to recognize and celebrate our graduation. Job well done! I look forward to our continued partnership as we commence on our journey toward transformed Financial Management in support of our great Army.