DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CECW-O

07 AUG 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS, ATTN: CHIEFS, CONSTRUCTION-OPERATIONS DIVISIONS, CHIEFS ENGINEERING & TECHNICAL, CHIEFS INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, CHIEFS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SUBJECT: Use of the Operations and Maintenance Business Information Link

1. The Operations and Maintenance Business Information Link (OMBIL) is a new web-based business information gateway that will allow Corps employees easy access to information about the Operations and Maintenance program. The OMBIL originated from the Operations and Maintenance Plan of Improvement. The purpose of OMBIL is to provide the data and information requirements for program and project management at all organizational levels. Operations and Maintenance (O&M) corporate management information is available from the OMBIL web site (http://ombil.usace.army.mil). The OMBIL can be used to maintain and track O&M business information. OMBIL can be used to view summaries related to O&M activities, output, resources, and performance.

2. The OMBIL links to the Corps of Engineers Financial Management System (CEFMS) using the CEFMS local indicator code tagged to the work item with O&M project site designators. The project site designators were provided by Operations at the divisions and districts, then Resource Management was able to create linkages within CEFMS. The OMBIL link to CEFMS expenditure data enables the generation of efficiency performance measures when combined with operations and maintenance output data.

3. The OMBIL will provide the gateway to data entry and reports modules for O&M program business areas. The business areas are Navigation (Locks and Dredging), Hydropower, Recreation, Natural Resources, Flood Damage Reduction and Environmental Compliance. Data entry modules for Hydropower, Environmental Compliance and Locks and Dredging have been deployed and are currently available for use. Status of the other modules is provided below in separate paragraphs.

4. Frustration with data entry into OMBIL was high during the January-February 2000 timeframe. A meeting was held in St. Paul, Minnesota in February 2000 with a small multi-disciplined group to determine the problems and recommended solutions. It was determined that a number of things had gone wrong at the same time. The impediments identified at the meeting have been worked very hard, and we are pleased to say many have been fixed. The toughest fixes are related to connectivity problems, which reflects the need to improve our communications infrastructure. Deputy Chief of Staff for Corporate Information (DCSCI) is

working to complete fixes to improve connectivity. Since the OMBIL data entry surges of January -February a "Health of the Network Study" (HNS) has been established. In addition, new frame relay connections have been added to the existing bandwidth increasing flexibility to handle "surge" requirements. DCSCI is aware of the need for increased bandwidth in the future and plans will be developed based on the results of HNS to scope and size the additional growth in bandwidth required by the various functional applications in the coming years.

5. Users who are able to log-in successfully to the system and enter data are encouraged to continue to use the available modules for Hydropower and Environmental Compliance information. Users should not spend a great amount of time however, when things are not working efficiently. If you continue to experience difficulties accessing OMBIL, contact your IM support office and the OMBIL user assistance group at ombil@usace.army.mil.

6. Status - Flood Damage Reduction (FDR). The FDR business area module is close to implementation for periodic inspection reporting. Much of the data needed for this business function is related to the Engineering aspects of Dam Safety, bridge and periodic inspections, etc. The FDR module has been developed through a team of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) with very little data input. Minimal data for testing was entered at a few selected projects and districts. The SMEs met in mid-July 2000 to validate the efforts to date. Following training, validation and correction of any errors, we will need Engineering and Operations to start entering data. The implementation date for the FDR module will be announced in a separate letter. In the interim, we do strongly suggest that Engineering and Operations at the divisions and districts check the screens that are available to become familiar with this aspect of OMBIL since it will simplify data entry and provide enhanced visibility of the aspects mentioned above. We also strongly urge that Engineering staff participate in OMBIL training currently being offered at the districts.

7. Status - Recreation. Early this year, a team of recreation SMEs reviewed the system and identified a number of necessary corrections, changes and additions to the input screens. The contractor is near completion of all the required changes. Division and district points of contact have been designated, and a User's Group has been established. The SMEs and the User's Group will conduct a comprehensive system validation review for the recreation module before proceeding with training and deployment.

8. Status - Natural Resources. In late October 1999, a team of natural resources SMEs reviewed the system and identified a number of necessary corrections, changes and additions to the input and help screens. The need was identified to load data for several standard pick lists. The contractor is near completion of the required changes and efforts are continuing to attain, prepare, and load data for the pick lists. The SMEs will conduct a comprehensive system validation review for the natural resources module before proceeding with training and deployment. A notice will be issued when training and deployment are scheduled.

9. Status - Navigation (Locks and Dredging). Minimal additional data requirements have been identified for navigation. Efforts are ongoing to complete navigation input screens to satisfy the additional data requirements. Users are able to access LPMS and DIS data through OMBIL. No changes are being planned for the LPMS and DIS systems. The waterborne commerce data is being automatically linked to OMBIL.

10. The business summaries of OMBIL provide a massive amount of financial and performance information that can be used by all levels of the Corps to understand and manage the O&M program. We are working with the Resource Management and Programs Management communities to use OMBIL generated summaries for CMR reporting. Another significant benefit of OMBIL is to reduce the number of data calls to the field. We are committed to using OMBIL. We are making efforts at this level to eliminate data calls and duplicative reporting of information that is available in OMBIL. We request that you help us by emphasizing the effort to input data, by supporting the elimination of data calls and duplicative reporting, and by using OMBIL as a tool to manage the O&M program.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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