

- Policy & Procedure
- Take Note
- Milestones

State of California

DWCNewsline

Division of Workers' Compensation
Carrie Nevans, Acting Administrative Director

1515 Clay Street, 17th floor, Oakland, CA 94612 (510) 286-7100

Internet Web Page: <http://www.dwc.ca.gov>

Newsline No. 45-10

August 23, 2010

Division of Workers' Compensation marks second anniversary of EAMS

Pioneering project ushers workers' compensation court system into electronic age

August 25 marks the second anniversary of the launch of the Electronic Adjudication Management System (EAMS), which transformed the way the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) conducts business—integrating its court and administrative functions into a comprehensive case management system.

The second year milestone is an opportunity to look at how EAMS—a monumental change, yet still in its early stages—will continue to evolve to meet the challenges of the workers' compensation system.

Before EAMS, paper file folders dominated the existing space in DWC's 24 district offices, and six different legacy systems represented the division's multiple business units. Getting a quick overview of the workers' compensation system from the mass of paper documents was difficult, slowing the division's ability to respond to conditions or issues.

EAMS changed all this for the better, creating new cases, generating workflow and tasks for staff, and setting hearings in an electronic environment with easy information retrieval. Eight months after launch, EAMS was recognized by the Computerworld Honors Program for bringing DWC's units together and modernizing its system. And by December 2009, 16 months after launch, one million document batches (each batch representing multiple documents) had been successfully processed into the system.

Like other technological improvements that ultimately win wide acceptance, from ATMs to electronic airline ticketing, EAMS has faced challenges as it brought about changes. As EAMS transforms the tools available to the workers' compensation community, incremental steps improve the system.

“It's taken time to turn the ship,” said DWC Court Administrator Keven Star. “We undertook a multi-year project to go paperless, and we're getting there. Our intention is to get the majority of our external partners paperless, too. We feel very good about what we've accomplished so far, and want people to know that more benefits will be realized over time for case parties and the public.”

The original vision for EAMS was that most filers would go paperless right away. But not every filer was ready to make that transition, so DWC took a measured approach with [optical character recognition \(OCR\) paper forms](#) that are scanned to get data into the system. OCR forms will be reduced over time as more filers go electronic.

A better glimpse of the court's future can be seen in the [e-forms trial](#), which began in 2008. Parties willing to file all documents electronically are given a logon to access EAMS, and receive immediate confirmation of submission of their forms and documents without having to visit a district office. Benefits include viewing case information over the Internet, picking conference dates and increased efficiency. The more than 400 external user locations in the e-forms trial have reaped these benefits and also helped the division reduce the amount of paper that must be scanned into EAMS.

"E-filing provides a great advantage over OCR filing and it has become a valuable tool in the way Floyd, Skeren & Kelly conducts business," said Andrea Coletto, an administrator for the law firm. "And by this time, e-filing has been tested by all the pioneer e-filers and most bugs have been worked out, so there is nothing but benefits to gain from joining the program!"

A new round of trial participants is joining the fold at the end of August. Those interested in joining the e-forms trial can email EAMS@dir.ca.gov.

And that's just the beginning. Currently in development is a new form of electronic filing and expanded access to case file information without a logon called the ["present term solution" \(PTS\)](#). The PTS will add a third filing method to EAMS, and will directly benefit high volume users and indirectly benefit others by reducing the amount of paper filed at district offices. The PTS, which began in January of 2010 as a result of input from claims administrators, attorneys, service providers, lien claimants, and other external system users, is more than 50 percent complete.

While the PTS will be a solution that lasts into the future, it is simply another step toward the EAMS External User Access Project, a long-term plan to improve access to the system formulated by the division and its external user working group. The external user team met 36 times over the last year to gather input and refine the requirements to allow more access to EAMS. Once funded, the External User Access Project will increase access to the system for all users.

Since EAMS' launch, DWC has enhanced user knowledge of EAMS by providing useful training and comprehensive tools on its [Web site for external users](#), covering everything from demos to FAQs to detailed examples of how to fill out specific forms, such as the declaration of readiness to proceed. There is also a free monthly electronic newsletter, *EAMS Insider*, for subscribers.

Today, EAMS works as a case management system doing the day-to-day business of the Division of Workers' Compensation, with great potential for the future.

"EAMS is a true success story for state technology projects," said Star. "DWC is committed to ensuring injured workers and employers are able to maximize its assets."

###

EAMS: The Big Picture

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Feasibility Study Report (FSR) approved	Request for Proposal (RFP) goes out for bid	Special Project Report (SPR) establishes costs and schedule	EAMS build takes place	EAMS launches for internal users	External user training conducted around the state	1 million OCR batches processed
		Contract awarded to Deloitte		e-forms trial launches for external users	EAMS receives Computer-world honors	PTS implementation ongoing
				EAMS OCR forms regulations enacted	System capacity increased by 600%	External user access project development ongoing
				External user training conducted around the state	Vendor OCR forms tested	Vendors initiate third party filing in e-forms
					Backlog task force initiated	
					Survey of external users conducted	
					Plan for EAMS access created	

###