

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
OCIO**

*Grants Online*

**006-48-04-00-01-3802-00**

**Fiscal Year 2008**

**1<sup>st</sup> Quarter**

**Operational Analysis**

This report focuses on the operational state of the project as of December 31, 2007, and is based on guidance developed by the Department of Commerce. The current project meets established cost, schedule and performance parameters.

## **Customer Results**

Grants Online continues to meet the needs of its customers. In the first quarter of fiscal year 2008, the Grants Online team conducted 2 grantee conference calls with the Grants Online recipient user community to address their questions and provide answers. Over 100 users participated in these calls and more than 40 questions were answered by the Grants Online team subject-matter-experts. Additionally, the Grants Online team conducted a User Group Meeting for any interested NOAA user following the release of Grants Online version 2.16. This session was attended by 40 internal NOAA Grants Online users who learned about the latest Grants Online software release. In October, the Grants Online team continued its internal outreach by conducting a three-day Grants Online training class in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Over 50 internal NOAA Federal Program Officers were provided with hands-on Grants Online training during this class.

The NOAA investment in Grants Online is delivering the services that were planned and expected. Grants Online staff continues to work with its Operations and Maintenance contractor to steadily improve the functionality and usability of Grants Online. In the first quarter of fiscal year 2008, the Grants Online team developed, tested, and implemented 2 system upgrades to increase Grants Online functionality and stability.

The Grants Online project is meeting its own goals and objectives as well as those of the agency. Project management controls are in place to ensure the project continues to meet its goals and objectives and monitor how the Grants Online project performs.

Grants Online reports monthly metrics that show call-in activity to the Grants Online Help Desk. Using ticket reports and the software tracking tool WebCIMS, Grants Online regularly measures the following information:

- \* Closed Ticket Report - Details the number of all closed tickets. Tier 1 is defined as “*How to...*” type questions;
- \* Monthly Activity Report - Details the number of tickets opened and/or closed during the reporting period;
- \* Open Ticket Report - Details the ticket location and severity for all open tickets.

In addition to Contractor performance, Grants Online’s Reporting of Grants Activity continues to expand. For example, an average of 12 reports are extracted weekly using the Grants Online data. These reports are used by NOAA Line Offices and the Grants Management Division to monitor and track all NOAA awards and grants-related actions.

Grants Online has several management control processes to ensure that operational, mid-management, and senior management have visibility. These processes include;

- Participation on the Grants Management Advisory Council (GMAC) chaired by the Director of the Grants Management Division.

- Monthly Reports of Help Desk Activity
- Bi-weekly internal Program Management Office (PMO) sessions
- Bi-weekly PMO-to-PMO sessions with our support contractors
- Software Releases approximately every 8 weeks that improve the functionality of the system and resolve software defects. Each release is accompanied by release notes and a PowerPoint presentation that is posted to the Grants Online website.
- A Help Desk available to all internal and external users of Grants Online
- User Group Meetings or instructions/slides following each software release

**Financial Performance**

The current performance of the Grants Online investment is within acceptable limits of variance for cost and schedule. Upper Management is briefed on Grants Online’s performance as requested. Our regular meetings include internal PMO sessions and Federal PMO-to-(Contractor) PMO sessions. This interaction and communication reduces re-work and is beneficial in defining requirements. The Grants Online support contract is budgeted for \$896,000 for fiscal year 2008.

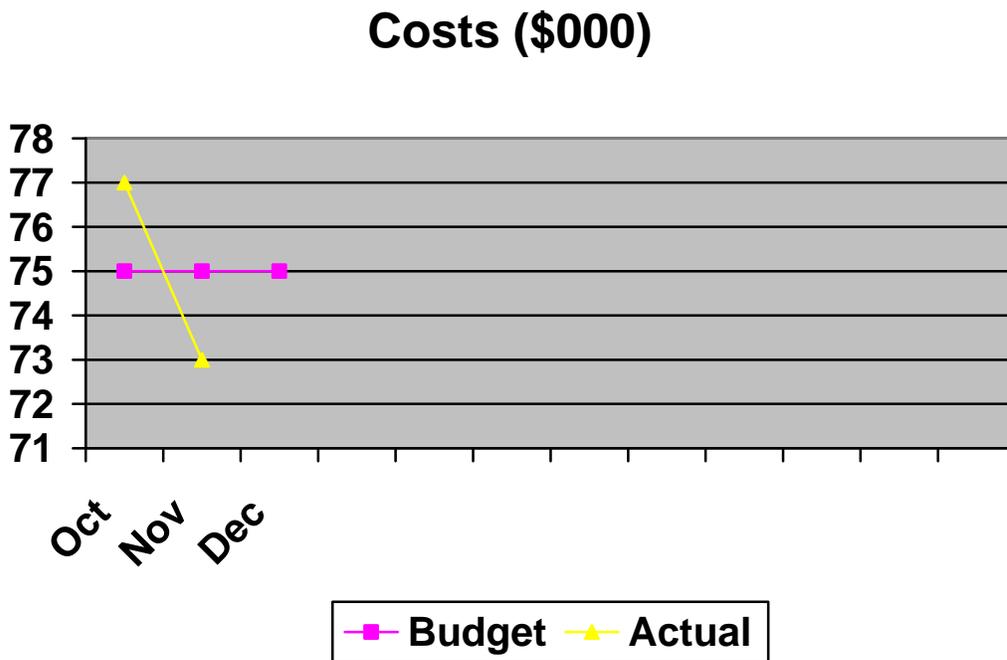


Figure 2: Budget vs Actual Costs

**Performance Measures**

Financial performance during the first quarter of FY2008 was measured by the project’s ability to stay within pre-defined levels of funding.

A time and materials support contract has been in-place since February 2007 and that contract's deliverables are on-schedule and its costs are on-budget.

Financial performance is subjected to a periodic review for reasonableness and cost efficiency. Monthly budget reviews are held with the project manager, CORs and contract managers to ensure contracts are within cost and on schedule. Monthly reports from contractors are required to ensure the Government has the information it needs to evaluate cost performance. A detailed review of work and priorities is undertaken if cost is significantly above baselined values. Also, any necessary corrective actions are also identified and implemented.

### **Innovation**

Customer needs are continuing to be met through on-going Grants Online system improvements and training. One of NOAA's goals is continuous improvement and, therefore, the Grants Online project will always search for ways to meet current and future customer requirements at lower cost. This belief can be seen in the Grants Online operations and maintenance contract vehicle, designed to keep costs as low as possible while still meeting the demands of the system and users.