

THE CFMS NEWSLETTER

August, 2003

News pertaining to an important event!

The Menu Planning Integrated Process Team (IPT) meeting took place at the Defense Supply Center Philadelphia on July 9, 2003. This is the first IPT meeting – a Food Ordering IPT is to take place on August 14, 2003, and an Information Assurance/Infrastructure IPT is to take place on September 11, 2003. In addition to these IPTs, groups focusing on Training and Deployment are planned for the future, as we progress through the program's timeline.

At the Menu Planning IPT, Ms. Lynette O'Brien introduced the CFMS Program, explained the purpose of this IPT, and outlined the projected milestone dates. Ms. O'Brien advised that the CFMS Program is classified as an Acquisition Category IIIA Program, and is one of the Defense Logistics Agency's (DLA) top-priority programs. CFMS is currently in Phase A, Concept Definition and Planning, and is scheduled to achieve Milestone B in March 2004. A contract award is expected in August 2004, and a System Development and Demonstration (Phase B) will continue until July 2005, when the system will be fielded.

The following information comes from the IPT, pertaining to the Services' requirements for meal planning:

Menu Planning

Each service performs the same basic functions when planning meals. On an annual basis, headquarters' commands provide standard menus to dining facilities for specified cycles (14 days (USAF), 21 days (USMC - CONUS), 28 days (USMC - OCONUS), 30 days (Military Sealift Command), or 35 days (Navy)). The menus use the 1,200 recipes provided by Armed Forces Recipe Service (AFRS), but may be modified and supplemented by headquarters or dining facilities. Menu boards meet periodically to assess current menus and recipes and adjust menus if necessary. Menu boards typically consist of a nutritionist and command representatives.

The factors used in setting/adjusting menus: USDA nutritional requirements, budget, acceptability, and ingredient availability. Acceptability is a fundamental consideration for all services.

Nutritional Analysis

Manufacturers are beginning to imbed nutrition data in bar codes on food packaging. However, since manufacturer nutrition data may not be standardized, the data should be obtained from a single source, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), to maintain consistency and integrity. That way, if a vendor changes or deletes an item, the linked recipes would not need updating.

Ingredients

The services need the ability to group ingredients by type, i.e., canned, perishable, semi-perishable, frozen, etc. The services need the capability to automatically link alternate items to recipes. For example, #3 cans could be substituted for #10 cans, or fresh produce can be used instead of canned produce. Currently, each substitute item requires creating new recipes. Common catalogs and standard stock numbers would reduce administrative overhead and allow greater control of costs.

Meal Production

Meal production involves predicting the number of people expected to attend each meal, choosing and adjusting recipes based on the expected headcount, budgeting, and the acceptability of each recipe. Acceptability and headcount information is normally retained for one year, although the Navy keeps two years of records to account for deployments, and the Air Force CFS system can keep the information virtually forever. The services typically offer different food lines: a salad bar, pasta bar, main line, and a short-order line (called a speed line in the Navy). Part of the meal production process is designing or diagramming the different food lines. Services need to be able to plan for surges, or unexpectedly high meal attendance, on the day of the occurrence. There must be an accounting for raw and finished leftovers and waste and a comments section is useful for explaining disposal of food (i.e., 3 pounds of leftover bacon used in the next day's BLT sandwiches). There must also be an accounting for items transferred or sold to other units.

Recipes

AFRS recipes and changes require manual entry into the current service systems. Automatic downloads would significantly reduce transcription errors and the time required to update recipes. A "standard" set of AFRS recipes should be available to all users. Users should be able to create new recipes while keeping the unaltered AFRS recipes in a database. The new or "local" recipes should be linked to an original recipe to reduce the number of nearly identical recipes.

Levels of Access

The IPT meeting included a brief discussion of the various levels of access required for the CFMS system, and identified similar requirements between services; however, distinctions and details need to be further discussed. The following table is a list of mess hall positions and a rough description of each job.

**Food Management Position
Levels of Access**

USAF	USA	USMC	MSC	USN	Description of Duties
Cashier	Cashier	Cashier	Cashier	Cashier	Operates point of sale cash register; verifies customer status
Administration*	Administration*	Admin Clerk/ MCFMIS Clerk*		Records Keeper*	Enters data about breakouts, returns, meals sold, etc.
				Jack of the Dust*	Responsible for physically moving items into and out

					of inventory.
				Master at Arms	
Storeroom (new position to be added)	Rations/ Storeroom Manager			Storeroom Manager	Overall responsibility for security and inventory of food.
Shift Supervisor*	Shift Leader/First Cook/Manager*	Mess Hall Manager/ Shift Leader (production)*		Leading Mess Specialist*	
First Cook*	First Cook*	First Cook*			
HQ Personnel/ Installation Food Advisor/ FS Superintendent*	Dining Facility Manager* / HQ Food Service Officer	Food Service Officer*		Food Service Officer*	

* Essential role

We would like to express our appreciation to all those participating in the IPT, as well as their chiefs, for their participation and support.

Another important piece of information!

DSCP did recently purchase back office and point of sale terminals, bar code scanners, customer access card (CAC) readers, and other hardware necessary in the retail operations of a military dining hall. DSCP is participating in a demonstration laboratory on site in Building 26, that will allow government personnel to “play around” with commercial food management software. The demonstration lab will enable us to see what commercial software can do, and how closely it matches the military’s requirements.

!!!!STAY TURNED FOR ADDITIONAL CFMS INFORMATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE!!!!

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