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Field Operations Memo 2001-30
July 11, 2001

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From:  Steve Kane, Acting Assistant Commissioner of Field Operations
Re: BEACON Stress Test VI

Background

To evaluate response time, user capacity and time needed to complete various activities on BEACON, the morning of July 18, 2001 has been designated to "Stress Test" BEACON Release 2.0.4.

While the "Stress Test" is taking place, every effort must be made to conduct regular TAO business. At no time should client access to AU Managers be denied.

There will be two tests in the TAOs. What follows is the schedule of activities to be worked on during the two tests. All activities must end by noon of July 18, 2001. **At no point during the stress test hours should users log out of BEACON. However, if the user receives an application exception/error message, he or she should log out of BEACON using normal procedures and then log back in.**

Test One: Start of Normal Business Hours to 10:00 a.m.

All AU Managers should access BEACON at the beginning of normal business hours of the TAO. Test One "View" activities must be conducted between start of normal business hours and 10:00 a.m.

After accessing BEACON, the AU Manager must:

- click on the Transitional Assistance Office Group icon;
click on the TAO Office Explorer icon;
select "View" from the menu bar;

**Test One: Normal
Business Hours
to 10:00 a.m.
(continued)**

- select and access the following Views from the “Daily Priority Actions” Group:
 - ♦ Conversion Benefit Discrepancies,
 - ♦ Documents Sent for Past Week,
 - ♦ Eligibility Explorer Interviews in Progress,
 - ♦ Interview Wrapup - Pending Authorization,
 - ♦ Interview Wrapup - Pending Release,
 - ♦ Interview Wrapup - Rejected Authorization,
 - ♦ Missed Interviews,
 - ♦ Monthly Reporting Status,
 - ♦ Outstanding Participation Forms,
 - ♦ Pending Applications,
 - ♦ Pending Applications Assigned to Another TAO, and
 - ♦ Reevaluation in Progress;
- select and access the following View from the “Assistance Unit Lists” Group:
 - ♦ Active by Grantee Name; and
- select and access the following View from the “ESP Assistance Units” Group:
 - ♦ Active Component Activities.

Note: In this section, when accessing Views, the list of chosen AUs will appear in the field on the right-hand side of the Office Explorer window.

**Special Monitoring
Activities**

While Test One is taking place, one Supervisor and one AU Manager in each TAO will monitor actual response time between windows in the selected activities and record the results in the appropriate sections of the View.123 form.

- The AU Manager should **print** the View.123 form found in S:\BEACON 2 Pilot Forms\Stress Test.

The Supervisor should:

- measure the response time on BEACON from the time an AU Manager clicks on and selects a View until the hourglass disappears (for accuracy, a watch with a second hand should be used to measure response time);
 - record the response time on the **printed** View.123 form in the following format: HH:MM:SS; and
 - return the completed form to the Implementation Manager.
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**Test One: Normal
Business Hours
to 10:00 a.m.
Special Monitoring
Activities
(continued)**

BEACON 2.0 now has a special response time tracking feature used to track certain response times within the application and hardware environments. The AU Manager chosen to monitor response time must start the BEACON Timings function at the beginning of Test One. To do this:

- double click on the BEACON Timings icon;
- highlight the "0" in the Frequency Interval (minutes) field and change the "0" to "1";
- click on the "Run Continuously" button;
- minimize the window; and
- work on Test One Activities.

Note: If help is needed accessing this window, consult the MIS EDP Coordinator.

The timings will be collected and stored in the central database.

IMPORTANT: DO NOT CLICK ON THE "STOP" BUTTON UNTIL THE END OF TEST TWO.

Stop Test One Activities at 10:00 a.m., **even if all activities have not been completed.** AU Managers should **leave the BEACON Application open until the beginning of TEST TWO. DO NOT EXIT OUT OF BEACON.**

**Test Two:
10:00 a.m. to
Noon**

Test Two "Interview" activities must be conducted between 10:00 a.m. and noon.

Test Two requires as close to 100 percent participation as possible of each TAO's AU Managers and Supervisors with the following exception. To conduct normal TAO business, AU Manager(s) and Supervisor(s) must be designated as "duty workers" for each TAO. They are not required to perform Test Two activities.

AU Managers participating in Test Two must:

- arrange to conduct a portion of the week's practice activities (the casework activities listed on the revised BEACON Pilot Activities Checklist), as previously described in Field Operations Memo 2001-21: "BEACON Release 2.0 Pilot Activities - Phase IV" during the hours of Test Two; and
- complete the BEACON 2 Stress Test Activity Record form.

Note: AU Managers should **print** the BEACON 2 Stress Test Activity Record form found in S:\BEACON 2 Pilot Forms\Stress Test.

The **printed** form should include:

- ♦ the activity performed (task);
 - ♦ the name/SSN of the grantee;
 - ♦ actual time it was started (start time);
 - ♦ actual time it was completed (end time); and
 - ♦ comments.
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**Test Two:
10:00 a.m. to
Noon (continued)**

Each Supervisor will compile the results for his or her unit on one BEACON 2 Stress Test Activity Record form completed online, recording the results of Test Two. E-mail the completed form to the Implementation Manager.

Special Monitoring
Activities

While Test Two is taking place, one Supervisor and one AU Manager in each TAO will monitor actual response times between windows in the following activities and record the results in the appropriate sections of the **printed** Interview.123 form (found in S:\BEACON 2 Pilot Forms\Stress Test):

- one application (**for this activity, AU Managers should not select “real” applications pending in PACES or any created in BEACON. They should create new applications**);
- one reapplication (**for this activity, AU Managers should select an AU closed on BEACON for over 30 days**);
- one extension AU interview (**for this activity, AU Managers should select an AU active on BEACON and include ESP Services, EDP Disposition and ESP Participation**);
- one teen parent AU interview (**for this activity, AU Managers should select an AU active on BEACON and include ESP Services, EDP Disposition and ESP Participation**); or
- one reevaluation (**for this activity, AU Managers should select an AU active on BEACON**).

Note: The AU Manager should **print** the Interview.123 form found in S:\BEACON 2 Pilot Forms\Stress Test.

The Supervisor should:

- measure the response time on BEACON from the time an AU Manager clicks on the “Next” or “Finish” button until the next screen is displayed (for accuracy, a watch with a second hand should be used to measure response time);
 - record the response time on the **printed** Interview.123 form in the following format: HH:MM:SS and note the button (either “Next” or “Finish”) used; and
 - return the completed form to the Implementation Manager.
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**Test Two:
10:00 a.m. to
Noon
Special Monitoring
Activities
(continued)**

Additionally, the AU Manager chosen to monitor response time for Test Two (if he or she is different from the AU Manager in Test One) must start the BEACON Timings function at the beginning of TEST Two. To do this:

- double click on the BEACON Timings icon;
- highlight the “0” in the Frequency Interval (minutes) field and change the “0” to “1”;
- click on the “Run Continuously” button;
- minimize the window; and
- work on Test Two Activities.

Note: If help is needed accessing this window, consult the MIS EDP Coordinator. If the AU Manager monitoring response time did the same for Test One, the BEACON Timings window will already be enabled.

The timings will be collected and stored in the central database.

At the end of Test Two, maximize the window and click on the “Stop” button.

Stop Test Two Activities at noon, even if all activities have not been completed.

**MIS EDP
Coordinator
Responsibilities**

The MIS EDP Coordinator must ensure:

- the hardware and network are functioning properly with the current version of BEACON;
 - the BEACON Stress Test forms are available and accessible online; and
 - that during the Stress Test the recording format standards for all Stress Test activities are followed by AU Managers and Supervisors.
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**Supervisor
Responsibilities**

During Test One and Test Two, the Supervisor must:

- coach AU Managers through the various activities;
- ensure AU Managers are working on their designated Test Two Pilot activities;
- perform Supervisor authorizations;
- review and compile his or her AU Managers' BEACON 2 Stress Test Activity Record forms onto one BEACON 2 Stress Test Activity Record form (completed online) and e-mail it to the Implementation Manager; and
- the **selected** Supervisor must monitor response time between windows and record the results on the **printed** View.123 and Interview.123 forms and return them to the Implementation Manager.

**Implementation
Manager
Responsibilities**

The Implementation Manager must:

- ensure all AU Managers are performing Test One "View" activities;
 - ensure that one AU Manager and one Supervisor are performing the timing activities for Test One "View" activities;
 - ensure that all AU Managers and Supervisors (with the exception of the designated AU Manager and Supervisor conducting normal TAO business) are performing Test Two "Interview" activities;
 - ensure that one AU Manager and one Supervisor are performing the timing activities for Test Two "Interview" activities;
 - once the Stress Test is over, using the **online forms**, complete: (1) one View.123 form for Test One for the TAO, (2) one BEACON 2 Stress Test Activity Record form for Test Two for the TAO which combines the results from all AU Managers participating in the timing of Test Two and (3) one Interview.123 form; and
Note: Times **MUST BE** recorded in HH:MM:SS format.
 - e-mail all **completed** forms to the Customer Service Center and the Regional Director by **close of business** on July 18, 2001. The title of the e-mail must include the TAO name.
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**Instructions for
Completing
BEACON Stress
Test Forms
Online**

To complete the View.123 and Interview.123 forms **online**, the Implementation Manager must:

- access the forms at S:\BEACON 2 Pilot Forms\Stress Test;
- enter the appropriate information in the yellow cells (no columns, rows or cells should be added to or removed from these forms);
- enter the Office and Worker fields, as appropriate, replacing “TBD” with the TAO and AU Manager name(s); and
- enter the time taken to complete the specific activity in the following format: HH:MM:SS. This is important so that the information can be summarized at the state level. If the exact format is not used, the timing information cannot be calculated properly and included in the final test results.

Example: If an activity took one minute and 27 seconds to complete, enter this as 00:01:27 in the yellow cell after the appropriate activity.

During previous Stress Tests, some time entries had quotation marks around them or used periods, semicolons or blank spaces to separate the hours, minutes and seconds. Additionally, subjective comments such as “very fast” or “clocked out” were entered.

In order to have the most accurate measurement of time between windows, **enter the timing information in HH:MM:SS format only.**

Questions

Policy-related questions should be referred by your Hotline designee to the Policy Hotline at 617 348-8478. Systems-related questions should be referred to Customer Services at 617 348-5290.
