

TESTIMONY OF MICHAEL P. HUERTA
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ON THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S
"YEAR 2000" ACTIVITIES
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT,
INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
AND OVERSIGHT
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 24, 1997

Chairman Horn and members of the Subcommittee. I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss the Department of Transportation's "Year 2000" activities.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) welcomes the opportunity to update the Subcommittee on our efforts to address the Year 2000 problem. Our goal is to complete Year 2000 conversions by December 1998 and to fully test those conversions before the turn of the century. In the last year, we have made substantial progress towards achieving that goal.

The most important mission of the Department of Transportation is to ensure the safety of the American traveling public. We are sensitive to the risks that the Year 2000 problem poses to that critical mission. As the Chief Information Officer (CIO), I am responsible for leading the Department's Year 2000 efforts.

The Department is following the five phases outlined in the "Best Practices" planning framework developed by the Best Practices Subcommittee of the Interagency Year 2000 Committee. Let me

summarize our progress in each of these phases.

Awareness Phase: Our awareness campaign has been extensive and directed at all levels of the Department. For example, in November 1996, the Senior Management Council, which is chaired by the Deputy Secretary and attended by the Deputy Administrators of all of the DOT operating administrations, was briefed on the potential consequences of the Year 2000 problem.

Additionally, we are using in-house television, our Intranet site and printed material to alert people to this problem. Other examples of outreach include extensive Year 2000 awareness sessions hosted by both the United States Coast Guard and the Federal Aviation Administration, this past fall, attended by representatives from their Headquarters and field offices. We estimate this phase is about 90% complete, but recognize that there will be a continuing level of effort throughout the life of this project.

Assessment Phase: My staff surveyed the operating administrations in October 1996, in order to inventory our Information Technology systems and to assess progress on corrective activities. We received information on 180 systems, of which 163 are considered critical. The Air Traffic Control systems were not included in the survey results, as they are undergoing more extensive evaluation due to their complexities. Additionally, a number of the systems that were surveyed are undergoing further assessment. Our intention is to meet the goal reported to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) of December 1997.

Renovation Phase: The renovation phase will include not only changes to source code in

applications, but also securing Year 2000 compliant updates to commercial-off-the-shelf packages and systems that support organizational missions and goals. Renovation efforts are underway on several systems on which assessments have been completed. For example, renovation of the Department's Consolidated Personnel and Management Information System (CPMIS) was completed in January 1997. Our intention is to meet the goal reported to OMB of December 1998 for this phase.

Validation Phase and Implementation Phase: Once we complete renovation of systems and applications, we will begin the task of testing and validating that corrections are functioning according to design. These two phases will also include ensuring that ties to external customers and systems will not compromise the effectiveness of our Year 2000 compliant systems. As testing and validation activities are completed, the Year 2000 compliant systems and applications will be implemented throughout the organizations for final assurance that they are functioning properly. Our intention is to meet the goal reported to OMB of December 1999.

Taking corrective actions within this framework is the responsibility of our ten operating administrations and other departmental organizations who operate automated systems. Each entity faces different challenges depending upon the complexity of their systems. Consequently, different organizations are at various stages in addressing the problem. Consistent across the Department, however, is; 1) the recognition at the highest levels of management of the need for corrective actions; 2) an active Year 2000 program in each operating administration; and 3) the appropriate management structures to ensure success.

Briefly summarized, major activities within the Department include the following:

Office of the Secretary (OST):

Chief Information Officer (CIO): My office is providing leadership and ensuring that the appropriate urgency is being given to this project. A full-time Year 2000 Project Coordinator is serving as a facilitator and clearinghouse for information across the Department. To date, efforts have included conducting awareness sessions, elevating the visibility of the problem, maintaining and updating an inventory of all DOT systems, tracking the progress of conversion efforts, and alerting budget officials of possible funding requirements.

Departmental Administrative Systems: The Assistant Secretary for Administration and the Chief Financial Officer serve as program sponsors for major departmental business applications. Under their leadership, we are actively working to ensure Year 2000 compliance. Upgrades were completed last year to allow our Integrated Personnel Payroll System (IPPS) to provide forecasts beyond the Year 2000. The conversion of the Departmental Accounting and Financial Information System (DAFIS) is currently underway with a December 1998 target completion date.

OST Applications: There are also several small office applications that reside on desktop platforms that are undergoing assessment. Plans and schedules for these systems and applications are being developed by the program managers and sponsors.

Federal Aviation Administration: The FAA faces the most challenging Year 2000 problems because of the complexities of the Air Traffic Control systems. In recognizing this challenge, FAA formalized its Year 2000 efforts in July 1996 with the establishment of an agency-wide Steering Committee. The committee is composed of representatives from each of seven Lines of Business and is responsible for the development of project plans, documenting Year 2000 progress through systematic reporting and providing a forum for the regular exchange of information. The agency's CIO, a senior executive, is responsible for coordinating the Year 2000 efforts. FAA has completed a number of awareness activities for all levels of the organization. Most importantly, the FAA Air Traffic Control systems development, maintenance and test organizations are now systematically assessing/testing systems in the automation domain which includes en route, terminal, oceanic and non-radar weather programs. Testing is being done at the FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center in Atlantic City. This "real world" testing will provide the necessary assurance that the Year 2000 problem is appropriately addressed in the Air Traffic Control system. We expect preliminary assessments to be completed by May 31, 1997.

Another major portion of the Air Traffic Control systems are in the Communications, Navigation and Surveillance domain. These systems include radar weather systems, voice switching/recording, radio communications, radar systems, Global Positioning System and others. These systems are just beginning assessment. The FAA target for completion of project plans associated with all major Air Traffic Control systems is May 1997 and completion of comprehensive assessments by December 31, 1997.

United States Coast Guard: Responsibility for the Year 2000 effort in the Coast Guard rests with the CIO, who is a flag officer. The USCG has issued service-wide policy and guidance regarding the impact of Year 2000 on information systems and formed a Year 2000 Work Group consisting of representatives from Headquarters and field units. The USCG completed an assessment, in January 1997, of software applications, computer hardware, and equipment with embedded microprocessors. These include major systems associated with marine safety, vessel traffic services, law enforcement, and business systems as well as embedded chips in video cameras that are essential for date-stamping evidence in the Coast Guard law enforcement mission. The USCG is now using this data to determine resource requirements necessary to renovate and test or replace affected applications and systems.

Federal Highway Administration: FHWA has been working for some time to ensure all of its systems will accommodate the Year 2000. Responsibility has been assigned to the Associate Administrator for Administration. FHWA originally developed its Financial Management Information System in April 1989, to accommodate 4-digit date fields, and the Motor Carrier Management Information System will have date fields converted when the current system restructuring is completed this month. FHWA continues to work with the Transportation Administrative Service Center Computer Center to upgrade the mainframe platform that hosts the FHWA grant programs.

Federal Transit Administration: The FTA's Year 2000 assessment process is covering the agency's microcomputer, Local Area Network (LAN) file server, and mainframe/IDMS-based

application platforms. FTA has compiled a comprehensive plan for its mainframe applications (including those involving grants) that will track programming changes, as well as changes made to data base records. The FTA is also examining the effect of "feeder" systems on its critical mainframe applications to ensure that these "feeder" systems will not have any adverse effects on these important applications. The Director of FTA's Office of Information Resource Management has primary responsibility for corrective actions.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: NHTSA has reviewed its two major systems: the National Driver Register and the Contracts Control - Acquisition Data Interchange System. Both will require modifications to be Year 2000 compliant. Under the leadership of the Director, Office of Information Resource Management, NHTSA is developing plans to ensure that these systems will be Year 2000 compliant.

Federal Railroad Administration: The FRA has developed a detailed plan of action for assessing the Year 2000 issue on its information systems. FRA completed an inventory of its 16 major and secondary information systems in December 1996. The majority of FRA systems are client/server based and their operating systems, network and applications software are primarily commercial-off-the-shelf products. FRA plans to upgrade this software to ensure compliance in advance of the Year 2000. FRA's Associate Administrator for Administration and Finance is responsible for overseeing these efforts.

Maritime Administration: MARAD has completed the awareness phase in which its executives

were briefed on areas of concern associated with this problem. MARAD has appointed a program manager under the Associate Administrator for Administration to lead its efforts. MARAD has drafted a preliminary action plan.

Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation: The SLSDC staff has eleven critical systems that will require Year 2000 fixes. SLSDC plans to have work completed by the end of calendar year 1998 or earlier. Responsibility for these efforts has been assigned to the Director for Administration.

Research and Special Programs Administration: The RSPA Information Resource Manager is overseeing its Year 2000 program. The major organizations within RSPA are addressing aspects of the Year 2000 problem. RSPA Headquarters, the Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) and the Office of Hazardous Materials (HMS) have small amounts of coding to review. OPS has recently completed a conversion of its primary database to make it Year 2000 compliant and the HMS systems were determined to be compliant. The Volpe National Transportation Systems Center has recently convened a task force to assess its vulnerability.

Bureau of Transportation Statistics: BTS is a relatively new organization within the Department. With one exception, all of the Bureau's computer systems are less than five years old. The Bureau's Office of Airline Information currently is the only program area that has systems impacted by the Year 2000 problem. Assessment of the extent of the Year 2000 problem has been completed, a plan for fixing the problem has been developed, and renovation activities

are currently underway.

Transportation Administrative Service Center (TASC): The TASC Computer Center has had an active Year 2000 program since late 1995. Under the leadership of the TASC Principal for Information Technology Operations, TASC has identified two critical systems that are not yet Year 2000 compliant. They are the Headquarters Telephone System and the mainframe operating system component of the Enterprise System. Both systems use commercially developed software that is presently installed in major systems internationally. The mainframe operating system's Year 2000 compliant software release is presently being tested and is expected to be in full operation within three months. The telephone system software upgrade will be available in the first quarter of 1998.

In closing, let me emphasize that we at the Department are taking and will continue to take all steps necessary to ensure that our automated systems, especially those that protect the health and safety of the American traveling public are not disrupted by the Year 2000 problem.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee. I would now be happy to respond to your questions.

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