

SURVEY OF STATE EMPLOYEES

Edison Enterprise Resource Planning System

**Compilation of Public Comments Provided by
Human Resource Directors Regarding the
Edison Enterprise Resource Planning System
in Response to Survey**

May 2009



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
COMPTROLLER OF THE TREASURY**

**Department of Audit
Division of State Audit**



As stated in the introduction, your comments are completely anonymous. With regard to any written comments you might provide, we would like to compile those comments and include them in our report. Please consider if you wish to include any personal identifying information in these comments. If you would like to provide comments on Edison that may be compiled or summarized and included in our report, please provide them here:

1. Our HR Division has spent an inordinate amount of time since "go live" that was significantly greater than expectations. We have found the Edison help desk to be ineffective, especially during "go live" and for several months following that period. Apparently, they were experiencing their own "learning curves," which was disappointing, because we expected them to be more prepared, better trained, and more knowledgeable. We experienced significant issues with the Benefits Administration center ranging from regular long wait times on the phone (45 minutes to an hour) to errors, inconsistent information, repeated follow-ups, and individuals not entered into the system. We addressed those through the management team, which took numerous attempts. A benefit change that might typically take minutes on our end (pre-Edison), was taking hours to input, follow up, resend, and resolve. We spent an extensive amount of additional time training staff during and after "go live." We did try to promote and celebrate the transition at the same time. We even had an Edison Open House with music and fun. We have found ourselves continuing to schedule Edison labs with individual groups, as the learning curve has still not been overcome for everyone. Our key was to build relationships with those state employees (Edison team, DoHR, F&A, benefits) who seemed to be most knowledgeable and helpful, and to go back to those people to help us resolve issues. We had to find those people ourselves. I'm not sure what role our Edison ACE was supposed to play at and after "go live," but they seemed to disappear entirely. It would have been helpful to have them continue to be our "go to" person. We have spent a ridiculous amount of time researching, solving problems, and trying to figure out what the system was doing, why, and how to overcome it. We have had to eliminate one of our alternative schedules due to the Edison system's inability to accommodate the schedule. A big issue for me was that we had no control over the system. Had we purchased this system ourselves, we would have been able to directly contact the vendor, have the software adjusted, and have knowledgeable individuals who really know the system to help us. I found the fact that the split workweek resulting from a semimonthly payroll being a significant reason for the delay of "go live" an amazing response based on the feasibility studies and foundations that I assumed preceded implementation. We continue to have extra manual processes required, including paper supplementals with mounds of attachments for retroactive adjustments, etc. We still can't even obtain year-to-date salaries on individuals. DoHR's timeliness has continued to be below expectations. For an issue such as terminating an employee in the system (making them inactive), so they receive their COBRA packet in a timely manner (under federal law), we continued to be told there were hundreds of terminations that hadn't been entered piled on a DoHR employees desk for approval. They were backlogged. Other situations resulted in the same response, "hundreds backlogged...get in line." This has all resulted in not only a

significant amount of additional time spent by my HR staff, but also in morale issues and complaints directed at my team affecting the credibility of the HR team at our agency. It has also resulted in negative perceptions of our agency and of state employment by new employees when they couldn't get their medical coverage. This affects morale, our abilities to attract quality employees, and retention.

2. Everyone was aware that SEIS needed a heart transplant, but this system was not the answer.
3. Having to key time and approve twice during a split workweek. Dropping data off for no reason. Taking too long to remove employees off the system when separated, causing exceptions.
4. Edison has tremendous potential but its greatest flaw is the fact it was not designed for the specialized hiring methods allowed at the state. I believe the Edison system would run much smoother if we did away with mismatches, overlaps, temporary, and emergency hiring. In addition, I believe it could be beneficial to put together a problem solving group. This group could consist of 5 to 7 individuals who could troubleshoot Edison problems or agency issues. Almost operating like a consulting group to help agencies who can not seem to resolve issues between their internal processes and Edison.
5. It was anticipated that Edison would be easier to use and result in less paper but that is rarely the case. When we are reclassing a position, we have to fill out the PCQ, salary plan, org chart and send hard copies to F&A...we then have to enter the PCQ info into Edison and send the hard copies over to DOHR also. Also, originally we were told that supplementals would not have to be done but that is not the case...we still have to do that paperwork. We have to review the calc more due to Edison recalculating time so often. Only having the time admin run at 2 and 6...this means in a lot of instances, supervisors have to approve time after working hours...10 and 2 for time admin is better. Susan Dill and Shelly Fletcher have been great to work with.
6. We have found the help desk to be a joke. If anyone answers the call, you get a ticket and wait and wait and wait. It makes one dig harder to solve the issues themselves.
7. On the 2nd question, on calculation of annual, sick, overtime and comp time, many were affected department-wide. Cannot pin-point an exact figure on these. The Edison system has not streamlined the HR process, as we were promised that it would. It has created a larger workload, more issues to resolve on a daily basis and ultimately more frustration. The system itself seems to be programmed for a smaller group of employees; it isn't feasible for those of us in large departments with 24/7 operations. The most disappointing piece has been the Centralized Benefits and Payroll. We can no longer help our employees, troubleshoot problems, and tell them what happened, why and how it will be fixed.
8. I do not believe some of these issues will ever be resolved.
9. The business process for entering personnel & timekeeping transactions on the departmental level into Edison significantly takes longer than the legacy system ever did. Last but not least, the number of queries that have to be requested each week

keeps growing. Some of them provide information we don't need and some do not provide information we do need.

10. I am surprised at the extra manhours and paperwork Edison has created. Each day there is a new procedure placed on the HR office due to system issues, or inadequacies. There is not much confidence in the system at this time and it seems that we have digressed overall. It takes double the time to pull and work registers in Neogov when compared to SEIS.
11. The primary system problems that have occurred have been resolved. Having no personal contacts for areas of responsibility is a barrier to communication and problem resolution. Lack of feedback to the department's employees and staff about resolution of identified problems is a problem. Only recently have the complaints about the HELP DESKS dropped. The problems stemmed from a perception that the HELP DESKS were Black Holes to make complaints disappear not to solve them and that HELP DESK staff did not know what they were doing. No followup customer service survey's were done to let employee's express their feelings about their service.
12. I made comments on an earlier "employee survey" from an HR Manager perspective. To those I'll add that on every T&L screen, all employees to whom HR staff and supervisors are authorized to have access should automatically appear on the screen without our having to click "Get employees" or "Search" or "View All". Continuation of so many Edison e-mails which take up time to address is indication of a problematic system. We recently had an employee receive a refund yet nothing appeared on a payroll report/register. In T&L, the beginning and end time for leave can not be entered, only the amount of leave (We had an instance a couple of years ago in which an employee was charged with an inappropriate download infraction on a computer in his charge. The time of the download recorded on his computer but he claimed to be out of the office at that time. We were able to refer back to the paper timesheet to determine the truth.). Please, if a new system is required, simply design it like the one before so that HR staff can devote time to other important issues.
13. An extreme amount of money wasted. I agree SEIS is outdated but it worked in half the time with no problems. I would be surprised if the state does not have any pending lawsuits due to the disenrollment from health insurance. One employee was disenrolled from his insurance 4 times, each month he was unable to get his prescriptions filled for diabetes and a heart condition until a phone call was made to Benefits Administration each time. Of course his premiums were deducted from his payroll check each month. One employee's overpayment was deducted from their payroll check 2 consecutive payperiods, when the overpayment amount was paid in full in one payperiod. The longevity overpayments created ten times more work for our staff. Some of our employees are still unable to enter their timesheets due to not being able to changed their scheduled hours.
14. The biggest issues have been with the benefits. (1) They have not been keyed into the system in a timely manner - therefore - insurance premiums have to be double or triple deducted out of an employees payroll check & employees can't afford for that to happen. It appears that those in charge don't see a problem with this. (2) Benefits have been dropped off of employees records, for no reason & then to catch this up

multiple premiums have to be deducted; again a hardship to employees. (3) Optional life insurance does not show on the employees benefit record. Therefore, when an employee has questions about this benefit we can't answer them because we can not see what they have and most of the time they don't know. (4) Some things such as 401k; basic life & basic accidental death insurance were dropped for no reason.

15. Difficult to obtain required information due to the many screens. Under SEIS data was on one screen. There are too many reports to run/audit and they are also too large (report with over 500 pages) or too many (must run separate reports for each cost center) or the report hasn't been developed yet to contain data that used to be easily acquired thru SEIS. Every personnel/payroll description (acronyms) changed and you must first learn the new terminology in order to ask or understand an answer/ or to enter data. The timeframe to process payroll is much shorter which makes other duties in arrears. Every day you run the same query to check the same thing (kinda like the movie "Groundhog Day"). As one module updates over night it may delete everything you did the day before. Having no control over issues being sent to a help desk to process is like going back to the system the State had 30 years ago. It's like sending information into a black hole with no control as to when data will process. Therefore you are unable to give employees positive feedback and hurts the reputation of the agencies HR & Payroll staff. Each agency will need to hire additional staff to process payroll & HR transactions due to all the reports and the time spent to run a query and all the additional time it takes to enter data due to the many, many, many screens involved. Many of my previous co-workers have retired since the start of Edison. Once all the "baby boomers" leave State government the reason for processing things and history of civil service will be lost. We are not teaching employees the reason behind our actions. We are teaching professionals how to be data entry operators. Moral is low because you don't have control of your work and other duties pile up and staff are getting tired of working on weekends. We are trying to make the State's policies & procedures fit into Edison instead of having a program written to meet our needs. None of the promises made on the front end happened and I do not foresee anything changing. Examples are: Employees can update all their beneficiary info. directly into Edison and can view their current designations.(can only enter beneficiary for saving bonds and cannot view current designations). Employees will mail their insurance enrollments/changes directly to Benefits Administration. Will not be accepted if sent thru agency's Insurance Preparers. Benefits can provide a copy of the form should the preparer need it. No more forms/ less paper. None of this came thru-forms must go thru agency & much, much, more paper used in viewing reports.No more force collects-employees will be billed directly - didn't happenNo more supplementals - didn't happenno more manual calculation for prior service - didn't happenThe process seems to change daily and unable to supply confident answers to appointing authorities & co-workers which which causes low moral.System unable to make any special accommdations for emergency situations.The senior State employees who joined the Edison team should be congratulated.Clyde Phillips, Jan Sylvis, Patrice Steinhart, Mike Morrow, Johnny Holder, Sandy Graf, John Moore, Pam Parker are just a few that deserve acknowledgement.They are catching the blame for a system that was written for private sector and not government processing. They are actually the only voice the

agencies have in dealing with the system and trying to meet our needs. I worked with the State when SEIS started and when TIS started and it only took about a couple of months/or less to adjust to the system. I am not the only employee who feels Edison is a "lost cause" and things will not get better but continue to get worse. I don't think we should continue to invest time & money into a "broken product".

16. I'm very disappointed that the \$130 million (?) spent on this system has yielded a product that is user hostile, performs very few real-time functions, and is down right clunky. I think the advantages it offers over the SEIS system are more than offset by its disadvantages. Our staff is working more hours to get people paid, to process transactions, and to administer benefits than they were when we had SEIS. I do not see this changing. I think Edison is a very inefficient system as applied to state government, and I also feel certain that the facts bear this out. I know we thought we could make it work by avoiding the mistakes that other governments had made. This thinking was naive at best and arrogant at worst. I assume this survey does not include our thoughts on NeoGov, which by initial appearances makes Edison look absolutely streamlined!
17. Many payroll and HR problems are resolved (in my agency) before the employee is affected. However, a benefit (insurance problem) cannot seem to be resolved as easily - I am not certain why.
18. I believe that the Seis system was indeed in need of upgrade and/or replacement and I also recognize that any new system has start-up issues that must be addressed. In some ways, the Edison System is a great improvement over the SEIS system and in other ways it is extremely cumbersome and not user friendly. As of this date, every task, transaction, data entry, inquiry, etc. takes significantly longer for my staff and I to complete within the Edison System. As for the training we received, it was useless and the manuals provided have been little help. From our dealings with DOHR and F & A, it appears that their training was less than adequate as well. Fortunately I work with individuals that are computer savvy with self initiative who have managed to navigate the system and teach themselves. As for F & A's responsiveness to our employees' issues and concerns and our needs for assistance, it is greatly lacking. F & A's attitude seems to be we'll do it when we do it and the employees will get it when they get it, and don't call us. That is unacceptable and needs to change now. There is a problem when you can't reach anyone within F & A on the ph one and/or they will not respond to e-mail inquiries. Perhaps they too need additional people, but something needs to be done. Our employees are our greatest resource and I feel it is the HR Staff's and F & A's duty and responsibility to resolve issues that are out of the employees' hands post haste. We were disappointed with the results of the implementation of the help desk and payroll and benefits call centers. In the beginning it was difficult if not impossible to reach someone in a reasonable amount of time and the information provided was not consistent. The fact that even the HR Staff was referred to the help desk with their technical questions was ridiculous, as the call center employees were not able to answer these technical questions. To date, we are still leary of any information received from these call centers, however the help desk has improved. In summary, I don't believe that the Edison System as a whole is a bad system or responsible for the majority of the problems since

implementation. I believe implementation is where the boat was missed. Perhaps better programming to tailor the Edison System for state government would have greatly improved the functionality of Edison, improved processing times, and made it all and all more user friendly.

19. The pre-launch Edison training was not effective in preparing users to actually understand and use the system to perform T&L, transactions or benefits activities. Almost every question that was asked was answered by the Edison facilitator/instructor (I will use the term loosely) would answer all questions by stating "That hasn't been determined yet." It should have been designed to meet performance objectives that reflect "real world" activities within HR. The training expended massive man hours and when "Go Live" occurred I don't know of a single HR employee that was prepared to perform any function within HR without making several phone calls and searching through the 12 Edison books I have on my desk. These books are not designed to provide "functional" look at any HR process like Hiring, Promoting, Separating, etc. They are navigational by design and do not show all aspects of any HR function. You have to know what to look for and most likely will have to use several book to perform any one function, like hiring an employee. If the book were designed as a functional operational guide, a HR employee would look up "hire an employee" and there would be a checklist with appropriate notes and direction so you don't have to hunt through several books to ensure you left out something that comes back to haunt you in a few weeks. Basically, I can't believe we've spent this much money and received a product with this many shortcomings. Whoever signed off on this being a working model and signed the check should be held accountable. I have other examples but if this feedback is ignored as my previous suggestions have been I choose to stop here.

20. None