

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

0150-08813-0005

Date: April 13, 2010

To: Chair, Information Technology and Government Affairs Committee

From: Miguel A. Santana, City Administrative Officer *MA*  
*MS*Subject: **GOOGLE IMPLEMENTATION WORKING GROUP ACTION TO EXPAND THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN, AND DURATION OF, THE GOOGLE E-MAIL AND COLLABORATION SYSTEM PILOT**

On October 27, 2009, the City Council approved a request from the Information Technology Agency (ITA) to negotiate a contract with the Computer Science Corporation (CSC) to replace the City's GroupWise e-mail system with Google's e-mail and collaboration system. ITA executed the contract with CSC on November 20, 2009. Council further instructed this Office to report back to the Information Technology and Governmental Affairs Committee with periodic status reports regarding the implementation process.

At that time, this Office reported that we intended to convene a working group consisting of representatives from the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst, the Office of the Mayor, ITA, the Office of City Attorney, the Los Angeles Police Department, and other City departments as necessary to oversee the implementation of the new system. The working group held its first biweekly meeting on December 8, 2009.

Pursuant to Council's request for periodic status reports, this Office now reports that on April 5, 2010, consistent with the recommendation of ITA, the working group acted to expand the duration of, and number of participants in, the pilot for this system because current pilot users have experienced issues and problems that have negatively affected their productivity and department operations. This expansion may result in the delay of the Citywide implementation of the Google system.

In February, selected staff from several City departments began to use the Google system on a pilot basis. Currently, 2,405 participants in 32 departments and nine elected officials' offices are in the pilot. On March 23, 2010, the working group invited all pilot participants to discuss their experiences with the Google system. At the meeting many of the departments expressed concerns about both the performance and the functionality of the new system. Performance concerns focused on the slowness with which e-mails were sent, received, and accessed in the new system. Functionality concerns focused on features currently available in GroupWise that are unavailable, or significantly different, in Google's system. Further, the Los Angeles Police Department indicated that several security issues have yet to be resolved, and that a pilot of its technical support staff must be successfully completed before it can be expanded to the rest of the LAPD. Some pilot participants also identified new capabilities that were not available to City staff using GroupWise, including collaboration tools, chat, and compatibility with a wider range of mobile devices.

Given that the pilot period was scheduled to end on April 9, 2010, the working group began to meet weekly to oversee ITA's efforts to mitigate the concerns raised by City departments. The problems identified are being addressed as follows:

- It is the position of ITA that the slowness of the new system is at least partially the result of shortcomings in the configuration of the City's data networks, and that one significant such issue has been addressed. The City's requirement to keep both GroupWise and Google operational concurrently has also negatively impacted system performance. In addition, the system works best with Google's internet web browser, Google Chrome, but most City staff currently use other browsers, including Microsoft's Internet Explorer or Firefox. ITA has had some success with addressing slowness issues. At several locations around the City with slower network connections, however, the new system still appears to operate more slowly than GroupWise did. ITA will continue testing those locations.
- ITA is compiling a list of functionality shortcomings. Some of the features that pilot participants have identified as lacking are actually present in the Google system, but are accessible in a different manner. In those cases additional training is required so that City staff can become more familiar with the new system. In other cases, however, the features are currently absent from the Google system. ITA is compiling and prioritizing a list of features that are absent and will request Google to enhance its system to include them. Google is not obligated to add these features to its system, but will report to ITA whether and when those changes will be made.

Based on ITA's recommendation, the working group has instructed ITA to delay the planned April 9, 2010 termination of the pilot period and instead expand the number of departments and participants in the pilot in order to more fully assess whether Google's system will adequately serve the City's e-mail needs. Expanding the pilot will give ITA additional time to address the performance problems, allow for clarification on which and when functionality concerns will be addressed, and will enable additional departments and users to determine whether the issues raised will hamper their ability to provide services to the public.

The length of the expanded pilot will be assessed on a weekly basis by the working group but the current plan is to add additional users and departments to the pilot by April 19, 2010. Despite the expanded pilot, ITA still believes that it will be able to fully implement the Google system by the end of 2009-10, as planned. ITA, CSC, and Google have increased support staff resources that are dedicated to the project in an effort to meet this goal. If full implementation is delayed into 2010-11, the City will be required to continue to pay for the GroupWise licenses and GroupWise-related software maintenance and licenses that remain in use. The cost of continuing these services will depend on the length of the delay. A two-month delay will result in expenditures totaling approximately \$580,000, a six-month delay of expenditures totaling approximately \$660,000, and a delay of longer than six months of expenditures totaling approximately \$945,000.

The working group will continue to assess the situation and our Office will report back to the Committee in the near future.