

## Go Live readiness - Guidance

### **Purpose**

This guidance is for use by the management of an organisation implementing a Shire's FrontLine computerised maintenance management system (CMMS). It is an aid for assessing Go Live readiness and deciding the Go Live approach. 'Go live' means commissioning the CMMS into beneficial operational use.

This guidance applies principally to organisations in which CMMS implementation calls for a degree of cultural change.

### **Background**

#### **Culture change**

CMMS *implementation*, as opposed to *installation*, is largely a cultural change initiative requiring considerable human relations management, education and training. When too little attention is given to the human aspects, then a CMMS project will fail to deliver on expectations, even when the technical approach is otherwise acceptable. As with all management of change projects, there has to be strong leadership and good communication with every individual affected by the changes throughout all phases of the project. Good communication must be sustained up, down and across the organisation.

#### **Strategic information**

Above all else, a CMMS is an operational information system to help 'get things done' in a workplace in a practical, standardised and efficient way. That is, request work, place orders, issue stock, record costs and downtime reasons, administer PM routines, etc.

Information can also be extracted from the CMMS for the higher-level management needs of enterprise planning, control and decision making. When one of the goals of the CMMS project is to achieve these higher-level needs immediately after Go Live, then a significant amount of pre-planning must be carried out to ensure that the necessary performance and exception reports can be produced by the system. The prerequisites are that the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the business and its processes are decided, CMMS-related work flows are defined, operating procedures are drafted and CMMS configuration, in particular the Code Tables, carefully specified to ensure that the system at Go Live is directly aligned with business needs.

Shire can assist you with implementing your CMMS in this business-focused way.

#### **Right first time**

Some organisations choose not to exploit the full power of their CMMS initially. They devote little thought to the best configuration of their system, leaving decisions until a later stage - when managers have generally reached a better understanding of the CMMS and how it can improve the operational performance of their business. Whilst FrontLine CMMS is hospitable to such an approach, the approach itself is inefficient (as is the case with any process or plan that does not achieve a 'right first time' outcome). Ideally, changes in configuration after Go Live should only be small ones to optimise the system in the light of experience and new circumstances.

#### **OK to Go Live?**

Initiation of Go Live implies either that all essential work has been correctly completed or that any remaining work can be carried out after Go Live with the system in its operational phase. In respect of the CMMS itself, the Go Live 'standard' is the minimum functional state of the system that will allow its effective use. Many implementation tasks can continue in parallel with beneficial use of the system, such as low frequency PM task definition, the development of parts lists, detailed purchase specifications for stock items, etc.

Because CMMS is a business system, and often mission critical for an organisation, it is essential that the point of Go Live readiness is carefully assessed. The final decision as to whether or not readiness has been achieved is the responsibility of the organisation's management group. Management should make their judgement in careful consideration of the risks involved for the business, calling for further information and advice as necessary.

## Go Live approach

The management of an organisation, in consideration of the risks and benefits, should carefully choose the Go Live approach for their new CMMS. The various approaches available are outlined in this guidance document.

## Readiness checks

A checklist for Go Live readiness is available from the Shire Systems Support Department.

The checks are targeted primarily at helping to achieve an acceptable *operational information capability* for the CMMS. They address the minimum pre-conditions necessary to achieve good order and successful Go Live. The checks will help to guide good practice and identify any deficiencies with the current state of the CMMS implementation, the organisation or other circumstance that could jeopardise smooth transition to Go Live.

The checks relate to project management, communication and procedures, as well as the CMMS and its operating environment. The checks have been abstracted from the *Shire Systems CMMS Implementation Framework*. Wisely applied, they should help an organisation achieve CMMS Go Live in a smoother and more controlled way.

The checks are not exhaustive and the higher-level management information functions are only covered in a limited way. We advise that key individuals attend an appropriate Shire training course or workshop to help ensure success. Shire can also carry out an audit of your Go Live readiness and help you close any gaps.

## Caution

***You should not attempt to proceed with Go Live if you have any doubts about your readiness. You are strongly advised to defer Go Live until you are properly organised.***

## Go Live approach

### Choices

In deciding the strategy for system Go Live, the management of an organisation can choose from the following basic approaches:

- Pilot project
- Phased introduction
- Parallel running with an existing system
- Hot changeover

### Pilot

Pilot project testing is a widely accepted, quality assured method. It is particularly applicable to organisations with large, multi-plant, or complex, multifaceted facilities. The chosen pilot area can be a single department, plant, or facility that is representative of the larger organisation, or it can be an entity with its own unique requirements. The area selected should trial the system in full operational use for a defined period of time. Some organisations choose a problematic area in order to realise early benefits from their new system.

The approach isolates emerging problems to the pilot area so they can be identified, corrected and solutions tested. This can be done without affecting the larger organisation or risking a high profile, politically damaging, poor first impression. Once the pilot trial and testing is complete, the system can be rolled out to the rest of the organisation.

The basic premise in choosing a pilot project is that there are likely to be unrecognised, hidden problems within the new system and procedures that must be discovered and resolved before deployment across the organisation as a whole. Because the prime aim of the pilot is to discover these non-evident problems, there is apt to be much more tolerance and 'acceptance' of those that emerge. After all that's what the pilot is all about! The workforce within the pilot area will often feel 'special' because they have been singled out to run the pilot. The resulting high motivation can contribute importantly to the success of the pilot and the implementation of the system as a whole.

### Phased

Phased introduction has similar benefits to the pilot approach. In this case, the separate modules of the systems suite will be implemented progressively in a logical, unfolding pattern, for example, Stock Control, Purchasing, Maintenance Management, Helpdesk etc. Alternatively, a selected module can be implemented area by area with the project leader/champion closely guiding and controlling go live activities in each successive area. The rollout sequence should be chosen to deliver early implementation success and maximise tangible benefits for the business.

### Parallel

Parallel running of a new system together with an existing system probably carries the least overall risk of disrupting the business. An existing system can be paper-based or electronic. Parallel running is necessary when the system is to serve mission critical business processes. However, the approach can be expensive, as many resources involved in the workflow will need to be duplicated. To save cost and reduce risk, a combined pilot and parallel approach can be adopted. Parallel running within a pilot area until the system is proven often offers the best satisfaction to an organisation.

### Hot changeover

With hot changeover a new system is placed into full live operation at a given point in time and the organisation's processes and workflows become immediately dependent on its accurate and reliable working. ***The hot changeover approach carries the greatest risk of business disruption and is the least prudent approach.*** The problems that will inevitably emerge on 'day one' and in the early days of system use will definitely disrupt the organisation's operations to a greater or lesser extent. Depending



on business needs, some disruptions could well be serious. If the system serves mission critical processes, then the hot changeover approach should be rejected. Alternatively, if it is imperative that the system is placed in full use as soon as possible and arising problems can be tolerated, then an organisation may see advantage in this approach.

When management is minded to choose hot changeover as their Go Live approach, then careful risk analysis and 'what if' studies should precede the final decision. After making a hot changeover decision, management should 'own' any workflow disruption and adverse consequences that result from it. Management should do their utmost to support the implementation team charged with making the hot changeover decision work.



## ***Checklist for Go Live readiness***

Please apply to the Shire Support Department.