



05 JUN 2011

Reply Attn of:

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## MEMORANDUM

From: Information Technology Group  
To: Department Directors & ANACOS  
Subj: What's New Platform & System Advancement.  
Ref: IT Dept Task 3954

1. The USCG Auxiliary Information Technology Group has released the live beta test of What's New 4.0. This is an entirely new platform, established on the original proof-of-concept project for a PHP & database driven structure. The subsequent data expounds on the modernizations, features, properties, and global system enterprise creation of the IT Group.
2. Prior to expounding on What's New 4.0, we have indispensable terms that all viewers will need to comprehend prior to reading the subsequent data.
  - a) *Live Beta Testing*: This term denotes activation of the code into production, as the primary system used by visitors. In the intervening time, the structure will still be experiencing improvements.
  - b) *Closed Beta Testing*: This term denotes discharge of the product to a quarantined number of users customarily in low number (i.e. 100 Aux Members) to begin with then progressing to greater quantities.
  - c) *Platform/System*: This term denotes source code (i.e. PHP code executed on the server) and the user interface (also known as the UI) of the system / dashboard. This also includes all of the end user code as displayed as a webpage.
  - d) *Formal Rollout*: This term denotes the issue of a platform/system to all auxiliary members by means of official communications and notices. This is normally done via the; COL&M / Parallel staffing, direct e-mailing destitution, and national mailings.
3. In mid-April we inaugurated closed beta testing of What's New 4.0. In subsequent weeks the new platform was accumulative exposed to loftier quantities of consumers. On the first of May 2011 we unrestricted the platform to live beta testing. This is not a formal rollout of the product, but the establishment of our six (6) month live beta test. The six (6) months of testing is a customary productiveness time frame allowing the utmost level of examination and operability.
4. The new system has been parsed for modernization receiving exceptional evaluations by many of the consumers. What modernizations and advancements are delivered in the platform? The improvements fall into two (2) classifications, observer improvements & "poster" renovations.

## USCG AUXILIARY WHAT'S NEW 4.0 OVERVIEW

5. We have added a substantial list of advances as seen by the customers; at this juncture we have delivered a list of fundamental advancements to the scheme.

- a) Categories: the new platform offers all posts to be arranged into categories, in so doing permitting the customer to select and view individual topics.

EXAMPLE: If you are a Vessel Examiner looking for news on VE information, simply click the Vessel Examiner category located in the right menu, thus only seeing posts in that category

Supplementary to categories, each post has added tags. Tags allow for supplementary arrangement of the topics by visitors, they may also be used as a principal process of categorization.

EXAMPLE: When viewing the category of e-news many of the posting will have a tag of "SITREP." Customers who wish to only e-news "SITREP" postings can do so by simply clicking the tag of "SITREP".

- b) The What's New Search System: Dissimilar from the preceding structure What's New 4.0 offers the ability for visitors to search both recent (posts made in the last 30 days) & archived postings (posted content older than 30 days).
- c) Automated Date & Source Stamps: As of June 5<sup>th</sup> 2011 when a post is made, the source data (i.e. the name of the content provider) is automatically presented via the upper right quadrant of each posting. The date of the posting is also automatically displayed directly below the source information.
- d) Read More: To assure all postings receive high visibility, posts that exceed 4/5 lines are equipped with a "read more" hyperlink. This is an automated text & link to the full posting, when clicked by users they are taken individual page for the posting where the full story/posting can be found.
- e) Individual Postings Pages: When a new post is generated, accompanied by the establishment of "teaser bites" exhibited on the main "What's New page, a full webpage is spontaneously produced for the full length posting permitting direct linking by departments and unit sites alike.

Resulting from the modernized database system, should we undergo renovations, the system URLs enact global PHP header redirect under the old URLs to the new postings there by insuring no 404 (page not found) errors.

- f) Featured Posting: During the progression of the year, periods when information to members is of the highest priority. These periods, while rare, require that the posted content to remain above all over posts, while being easily identifiable as acute information.
- g) Automatic Archiving: All posts on What's New 4.0 are removed from the main page after 30 days. This is done automatically with no action by any staff; all removed content are then archived, if viewed by visitors looks exactly the same as the day it was created. If there is a change to the look and feel of what's new all archived data will also update. This help to insure all links stay effective and content relevant.

## USCG AUXILIARY WHAT'S NEW 4.0 OVERVIEW

- h) XML Feeds & E-Mail Subscriptions: As part of What's New 4.0 each post has an XML feed generated, this allows for guests to subscribe via RSS 2.0, RSS 0.92, Atom and RDF. By proposing a wide range of layouts we indemnify all visitors have a sustained process for delivery of updates. What's New 4.0 additionally allows for e-mail subsections. This system sends an e-mail of each posting in real time
  - i) Automated Contact Form: To assure that visitors have an unpretentious location to defer questions to, What's New 4.0 has an automated in contact form usable via the top banner menu.
  - j) Custom Top Banner Menu: As What's New develops, postings come out, the need for further links may arise, to insure visitors can access all expanses in a simple fashion, in adding to the right menu links we also provide menu options across the top of the page.
6. The efficiency of a system does not exclusively depend on the viewer's side of the product. What's New 4.0 was built with content creator awareness. Constructing a new posting requires only a few clicks. Unlike previous systems, posters no longer contend with other national staff postings, users only see what they have posted.
- Many tools national staff will use are still under development, or in closed testing, as such we can only highlight the "released" features. When you wish to add a new post, simply click "create a posting"; then merely fill out the form provided; next, select the category the best fits your posting (note you are limited to only one category), you may further categorize your posting via tags; then publish your post.
- Creating a link in your posting content is as simple as highlighting the text you would like to link clicking on the "link" button entering the URL and clicking done.
- Have a multi passage article? As described above the new system requires posts with more then 4-5 lines to use the "read more" system. To do so, after you have close the first passage simply click the "!M" button. Doing so will create the necessary code for the read more tags and links.
7. The What's New 4.0 system depends profoundly on "*you*" the users to test the system, interact with it, and deliver feedback via the form (not e-mail as they will not be processed). We invite you to discover the new platform and test it out!

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Enclosure(s): None

Copy: DNACO (CIO), Project Management Records, Division Records.