



Co-East Business Plan 2003-2006

1. Business Profile

1.1 Business Overview

- ***General history and description of Co-East***

Co-East emerged as a body following funding from DCMS / Wolfson in 1999/2000. The funding enabled six library authorities within the East of England region to explore how library resources, such as library catalogues, community information databases, and commercial databases could be made available to the public on a regional basis through exploiting cutting edge ICT developments.

A key aspect of the project was to facilitate direct public access to these resources, both within libraries themselves and through remote access via users' computers at home, work, or other community venues. It was envisaged that the end result would be the creation of a virtual private network, available in 181 libraries across the region and directly in people's homes.

At the end of the funded phase in March 2000, Co-East continued to operate on a Consortium basis, including all ten public library authorities* in the East of England as well as HE, FE, and health partners**, to pursue both the technical solutions required to continue to share resources regionally and also to establish itself in the long-term as a body, working across the East of England to deliver, at an operational level, a complete resource-discovery/sharing/delivery network.

*Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Luton, Norfolk, Peterborough, Southend, Suffolk, Thurrock

**University of East Anglia represented on the Co-East Board; projects and consultation with Norwich City College; Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital Trust; Anglia Polytechnic University; University of Hertfordshire

- **Co-East Mission and Vision Statement**

The Co-East Partnership brings together the resources of libraries in the East of England in a discovery to delivery (D2D) network. Through acquisition and provision of innovative electronic solutions, Co-East partners seek to modernise regional library services to enable citizens to participate fully in society.

Future of the East of England Library Partnership (Vision statement)

The future of the Co-East Partnership depends on its Partner libraries and their users being able to communicate in many ways through state of the art technology. Equality of access will be strengthened and enhanced as a result of all Partner libraries participation in a distributed virtual union catalogue, which provides a gateway into such shared resource services as interlending, resource-delivery, digital reference, and e-content.

The achievement of the objectives of the current Business Plan will produce the following results:

- A live D2D network, consisting of a distributed virtual union catalogue, which provides a gateway into such shared resource services as interlending, resource-delivery, digital reference, and e-content;
- All partner libraries meeting or exceeding Co-East ICT Framework and interoperability requirements;
- An expanded membership base to include other library partners, such as HE and FE libraries, in order to create wider participation in the regional D2D network;
- A central management team, Board, and Operational Strategy Group working locally and regionally to meet jointly established goals.

In realising a fully operational D2D network, Co-East will be viewed by the region and across the country as a leader in progressive solutions especially in the areas of distributed electronic resource-sharing; joint procurement and development of electronic resources, such as commercial databases and e-content; virtual information resources delivery; distance learning; e-government; and management of services and projects. In this last area, Co-East will act as a ICT partner to EEMLAC, supporting the regional agency in delivering on electronic services and content. Co-East will also act as a partner organization to Resource, providing advice and support in such areas as joint procurement; networked services policy; and digital citizen services. The Co-East partnership will be strategically and operationally influential with central regional, and local government and agencies, as well as with professional organizations.

- ***Consortium Agreement***

As of 1 April 2002, all ten public library authorities in the East of England have confirmed their commitment to the Co-East objectives by entering into a legally-binding consortium contract with the following objectives:

- to facilitate inter-lending and resource-sharing among libraries in the East of England;
- to establish and facilitate co-operation connectivity interoperability and resource sharing between Members using Z39.50 and other appropriate protocols and technologies, which become available;
- to manage the systems and mechanisms put in place by the Consortium;
- to carry out strategic planning for Co-East including the development of a Business Plan;
- to negotiate and enter into contracts for the purchase of services and materials as considered necessary for the purpose of implementing the Objectives; and
- to develop new services and to manage such new services to the extent that they are compatible with and are considered to facilitate or fulfil the remainder of the Objectives and have been approved by the members at a Meeting of the Consortium.

In establishing a legal status, with Cambridgeshire as the lead authority, the consortium will also have the ability to negotiate and close contracts with suppliers. This activity will facilitate and consolidate the development agenda.

The contract has been agreed by the public library partners, in the first instance. Provision has been made to accommodate a broader membership to include HE, FE, health and other types of libraries especially looking to participate in a regional resource-sharing network (for more on Co-East membership, please see below Section 2 under Key Drivers)

- ***Co-East Management Structure***

In 2002-2003, enhancements in management and operational structure were accomplished through the expansion of the management team, and a restructuring of the workflow among the authorities. This last activity consisted primarily of the establishment of a single cross-cutting, rather than function-based, operations management group.

Board and Management team

Formal positions held within Co-East are as follows:

Chair of Co-East Board	Glenda Woods, Hertfordshire
Vice Chair of Co-East Board	Roger McMaster, Suffolk
Regional Manager	Linda Berube

Treasurer	Lorna Payne, Norfolk
Operational Strategy Chair	Martin Palmer, Essex
Lead Authority	Chris Heaton, Cambridgeshire

Different partners have also undertaken to perform other functions for Co-East:

Co-East website (http://www.co-east.net)	Hosted by Southend Libraries; Developed and maintained by Co-East and Cambridgeshire Libraries
Co-East Discussion Lists	Hosted by Suffolk Libraries
Co-East logo	Developed by Chadwyck-Healey

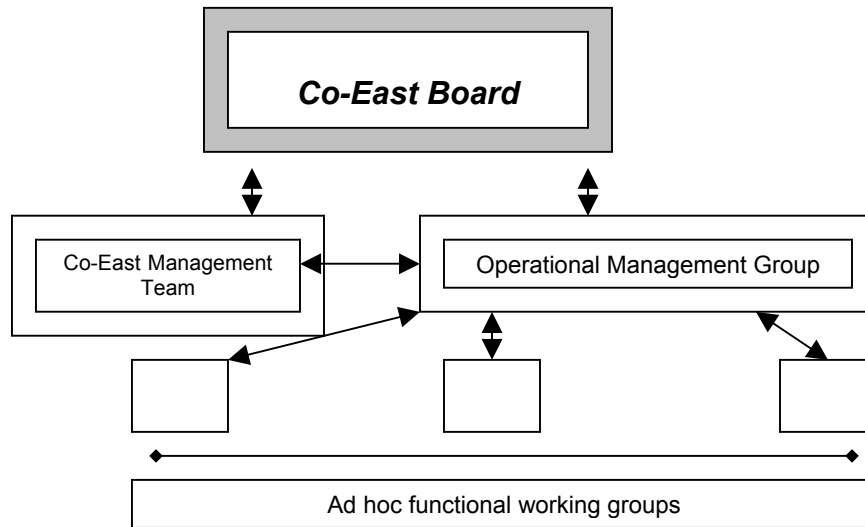
Board members

Name	Title	Authorities
Chris Heaton		Cambridgeshire
Geoff Elgar		Essex
Roger McMaster		Suffolk
Simon May		Southend
Anne Halliday		Thurrock
Veronica Wellington		Peterborough
Lorna Payne		Norfolk
Glenda Woods		Hertfordshire
Barry George		Bedfordshire
Jean George		Luton
Jean Steward		UEA

The Co-East Management Team, located in Huntingdon, includes:

Linda Berube, Regional Manager
Joanne John, Support Assistant

Co-East Management Chart



Operation Strategy Group

As the Co-East remit has broadened, so has the number of working groups directed by the Board to address such issues as e-content procurement; resource management; interim interlending; technical and procedural issues arising from interoperability of systems. At the 21 January 2003 Board meeting, the Board agreed to the following:

- Establishment of a single cross-cutting, rather than function-based, operations management group
- This group, with membership specifically identified by the Board and including the Co-East Regional Manager, will be composed of staff members who are able to take executive action (i.e. are budget-holders, managers etc)
- Dissolution of the current regular functions-based working groups, to be replaced by time-limited ad-hoc groups formed to complete specially-designated tasks assigned by the Operations Strategy group in support of Co-East Business Plan

The remit of the group includes the following:

- Consideration of and commitment to various development activities which support Co-East strategy/Board decisions/Budget Plan
- Contribute to Business and Work Plan development and review
- Liason with respective Board representatives and Co-East regional manager to ensure efficient communication and support of Co-East strategy within the authorities
- Commitment of staff and resources to supporting activities
- Delegation of functions, and assembly of ad hoc groups when necessary
- Development of Co-East Open House programmes for the promotion and dissemination of information about Co-East development streams (i.e., e-procurement; interoperability ; e-books; virtual reference etc)

- Meet 2-3 times a year to set activities and projects in response to Board directives, and to review activities and projects.

The Operation Strategy group, together with the Co-East Management team, will manage and complete activities in the following manner:

- Co-East Board to set work plan
- Operations Management Group to identify activities and participants
- Co-East Management Team to manage groups in completion of tasks.

- **Co-East Services**

Specifically in the area of resource-sharing and interoperability of systems, Co-East has achieved the following, the first of which has formed a live service:

- Interoperability of systems between Cambridgeshire (using epixtech software and hardware) and Essex (using GEAC and FDI software and hardware). Live transactions have been completed through a pilot phase, and have continued to be processed
- DS and CrossNet have come up with a beta version for cross-searching, as well as having produced a Z39.50 server
- Co-East Plus, a cross-domain project, has established an access agreement and a technical platform for cross-domain resource-sharing (for Final Report, see <http://co-east.net/projects/plusphase1/plusfinalreport.doc>)

Achieving this ILL/ISO interoperability between two different library management systems is a major, and judging from a search of the professional literature, and perhaps unique accomplishment. The Essex/Cambridgeshire pilot has contributed towards a greater understanding of the issues involved with ISO/ILL interoperability. A result of this development progress is that Co-East is conducting a technical review from which to build a regional cross-domain/sector ICT strategy and framework, able to respond to the challenges raised by the application of the protocols. During this consultation, Co-East will be drawing upon the expertise of CrossNet (M25, LLDA, Resource partnerships, and interoperable systems) as lead consultants, to be supported by UKOLN (interoperability and systems focus). The consultation should produce the following documentation and recommendations:

- A strategy/plan to strengthen the existing network, to include specification/standards for major servers, a plan for migration and compliance testing etc
- A review and assessment of the models best suited to regional interoperability which would not only help run this existing network a more efficiently than it does now, but also would help in scaling it to include cross-sector, cross-domain institutions (specifically guidance

on the model we have been looking at--centrally managed hybrid network)

- Relative costs of the model(s) best suited to our service requirement.

Co-East runs the following resource-sharing services:

- *Co-East Requests*, fully interoperable electronic interlending primarily between Cambridgeshire and Essex, and including Peterborough, Southend, and Thurrock (using VDX, Dynix, GEAC)
- *Co-East Interim Interlending*, an electronic interlending service, based on physical union catalogues provided through UnityWeb, V3, and web-based catalogues
- *Co-East Transports*, a joint transport service provided by Hays DX.

Co-East currently hosts and maintains two national services, which it took over from the former EARL Consortium for Public Library Networking: Ask A Librarian and Familia. For the first year of operation, these services were funded by a grant from EARL, and a subsequent grant from Resource has funded maintenance until 31 March 2003, and hosting until 30 September 2003. Co-East is currently negotiating with Resource for core funding which will allow for scaling and development of the services, as well as hosting and maintenance.

Collaborative e-procurement deals have been made for *Ebsco Masterfile and UK Reference Library* and *Gale's Times Digital Archives*.

- ***Business Plan 2000-2003***

As it has gained more national recognition, Co-East has been identified as a unique regional resource, in its emphasis on strategic and operational development in networking projects and services.

The previous Co-East Business Plan, including an ambitious work plan, has contributed to the enormous growth in services, projects, and capacity experienced by the Consortium, considerable in the last year alone. The milestones set for the last Business Plan period were directly related to the objectives set by the original Co-East project. The achievement of these milestones were the direct result of an expanded and committed public library partnership, as well as new partnerships with HE, FE, and health libraries. Development has taken place in the following areas:

- Interoperability: Cambridgeshire and Essex go live with Co-East Requests
- New partners: Bedfordshire and Luton
- Legal status: text of legal agreement approved and signed by authorities
- Grants for e-content, ICT framework, and virtual enquiry development from the Laser Foundation, Resource, EEMLAC

- Management of the second phase of development of EEMLAC's portal, Source-East
- Regional partnerships: EEMLAC; JISC; ELISA; EEDA; HE, FE, and health libraries
- National and International consultation: Resource; CONARLS; The Combined Regions; Other Regional agencies; European Libraries
- Management Capacity: Full-time Regional Manager and Support Assistant, as well as establishment of Operational Strategy Group
- Resource delivery: regional transportation scheme
- Joint e-procurement strategy and application
- Cross-domain projects: BLCPP-funded Co-East Plus, to explore expanding the virtual network to HE, FE, and health libraries
- Related projects: LearnEast, European funded project to deliver employment and learning resources through public libraries
- Expansion of Services: Ask and Familia

Co-East has been able to measure its success during this period to the extent in which it serves as a model for best practice in content strategy and interoperability development for other regional bodies (Foursite Consortium; CoSouth Consortium, etc). In addition, it has been recognised by Resource (*Consortium Purchase of Electronic Purchase in Public Libraries in England* <http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/future/re178-01.pdf>) and the East of England Museums, Libraries, and Archives Council for its expertise in ICT.

2. Market Profile

2.1 Key Drivers for this Business Plan Period

The original Co-East project and partnership evolved out of a belief in the benefits of a collaborative approach to employing state-of-the art technology for service delivery. This belief was driven, not only by practical knowledge of the types of services users require, but also by the larger government and professional climate at the time, promoting an inclusion, learning, and networking agenda. Thus, this Business Plan has been developed not only in keeping with Co-East's core objectives, but also in consideration of the key drivers from within the local authorities, the region, central government, and the profession.

- **Central Government**

A consideration of drivers must of necessity begin with central government programmes, strategies, and initiatives. Public libraries are now currently contending with the recently published Framework for the Future, and Public Library Position Statements replacing Annual Library Plans, as well as the culmination of the roll-out of the People's Network. Co-East's mission, derived from the original project which preceded People's Network development, already reflects the three areas of activity identified in the Framework :

- The promotion of reading and informal reading
- Access to digital skills and services including e-government

- Measures to tackle social exclusion, build community identity and develop citizenship.

The Co-East partnership, with its various projects and services, supports libraries in delivering on these national objectives.

Co-East has also been working with Resource on developing People's Network-branded services, most specifically a fully integrated information delivery service, including e-mail, chat, telephone, and knowledge database information delivery models.

- ***The Region***

Central government is continuing to develop regional mechanisms for delivering initiatives and programmes to support economic and cultural development. The mechanisms of particular pertinence to libraries are the offices and agencies representing DTI, DCMS, DfES, and Resource. In the East of England, these respective bodies-Go-East, Living East, EEDA, and EEMLAC- are relatively new, and are in the process of creating a co-ordinated agenda to benefit their respective sectors and promote partnerships across those sectors. In this environment, Co-East has established itself as a strategic and operational partnership with much to offer by way of technical and networked services expertise. Indeed, Co-East's partnership building with EEMLAC has resulted in managing the second phase of development of its professional interactive portal, Source-East and providing technical guidance and advice in its development of an information environment.

- ***Local Authorities***

Local government has been challenged on many fronts, not least by the regional agenda and especially the creation of regional assemblies. This environment may create conflicts for libraries developing services through regional partnerships. It is important for Co-East to be aware of this context and to ensure that its Business Plan, and specifically its regional partnership objectives and projects, promotes and supports local development in the key areas of social inclusion, e-government, community information access, and distance and e-learning. In this way, the Co-East partnership adds value at the local level, by affording libraries opportunities for new services delivery through project development and funding, especially in those instances where core funding is not available.

- ***The Profession-Partnership and Development***

Development

With the People's Network a reality, public libraries are in an excellent position not only to take advantage of new ways of delivering content and services, but also to raise their profile across local authorities and across the profession. Because of its commitment to creative service delivery, the Co-East

partnership can offer support in both areas. Significant development is occurring in the following:

Interoperability of library systems, a regional resource-discovery and sharing platform. Co-East is leading development particularly in the area of the ISO/ILL protocol across different library management systems. This development is in keeping with ongoing research into scaling the library catalogue/database into a primary resource delivery mechanism, making it especially responsive to delivering access to socially excluded groups.

Integrated information service delivery that facilitates enquiry access through email, web form, chat, and telephone. Product and services providers, such as LSSI, have created software to deliver 24/7 virtual reference, remote training, distance learning, and multi-site virtual meetings. The many applications for such software represent an excellent opportunity for raising the profile of public librarians and libraries locally and nationally: e-government, social inclusion, and community outreach services development are just some of the exciting possibilities.

New formats for content delivery through e-book and other handheld devices, as well as exploration of wireless, video, audio technology

Learning, community access initiatives, reader development, e-government - the above three IT development areas form a strong base from which to launch initiatives that have an impact on a range of stakeholders.

Commercial content development, another area in which Co-East has taken the lead, and continues to explore new ways of working with suppliers to ensure better content for public libraries in the UK, as well as negotiating contracts and agreement of joint pricing models.

Partnerships

Traditionally, HE libraries have led the way in technology implementation and procurement of electronic resources. With Co-East's interoperability agenda, as well as the wider implementation of the People's Network, public libraries are catching up in the development of technology-based services and content. In the East of England, HE libraries have benefited from such initiatives as EastNet and Inform25. There is a growing awareness, and push through RSLP and the Widening Participation initiative, for better access agreements at a regional level. The result of this awareness has been good links with other types of libraries in their locality, such as FE and health.

In fact, HE libraries in the region have often afforded other local libraries with enhanced services and access to resources. FE and health libraries traditionally have been less well-resourced than HE, and even public libraries, in terms of technology, although with recent initiatives from central

government this is beginning to change (National Programme for IT in the NHS; FE joint content procurement with JISC)

A natural progression from various networking initiatives, such as ELISA and ANGLES that HE libraries especially and the Co-East partnership would make common cause over the potential development of a regional technical framework for resource-discovery and sharing.

One tangible result of this move towards partnership has been the Co-East Plus project. Over the course of the Co-East Plus project, discussions with the University of East Anglia, University of Hertfordshire, Anglia Polytechnic University have explored whether the Co-East virtual network can be a mechanism for this development.

As a result of the Plus, the following has been produced:

- A working access agreement for electronic interlending across library domains
- A modular-based costing of a managed resource-sharing framework, especially suitable for smaller institutions looking for access to a regional network. This costing could also form the basis for pricing Associate memberships for Co-East.

In addition, HE, FE, and health libraries are participating in stakeholder consultation as part of the ICT strategy and framework consultation. Findings and recommendations from this exercise should provide the basis for integrating resource-sharing/discovery/delivery objectives across libraries with the current Co-East framework.

3. Co-East Workplan: Major Activities

Building upon Co-East current virtual networked services, and responding to the various drivers and key stakeholders, the following major activities have been identified for inclusion in this business planning period:

- Development of an ICT Strategy and Framework for resource discovery/sharing/and delivery, based on Requests and Plus findings and issues
- Continued interoperability development of Co-East Requests with DS libraries
- Creation of Requests procedures, and review of access model
- Widening of Co-East membership, based on response from stakeholders to the findings and recommendations of the ICT consultation
- Exploration of new service delivery and content access models, for example through e-book devices and software pilot; virtual reference toolkit trial; learning activities roll-out etc
- Development of new e-procurement strategy and test implementation
- Identification of linguistic expertise in the region to support reader and collection, as well as web resource development

- Continued partnerships and increased dissemination activities to promote Co-East services and initiatives as models for best practice, and in order to encourage funding opportunities.

Core Goals (budget)	Core Aims	Priority Tasks	Timescale
<p>A. Consortium Management</p>	<p>Provide an integrated operational platform for the regional development of networked library and information services</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget: funding and support (project proposals; national, regional funding) 2. Integration of HE/FE/Health agenda, membership (meeting with libraries to promote Co-East framework/membership etc; development of plan for participation) 3. Development of tiered membership subscription fees, including fees for access to ICT framework 4. Restructure of working groups 5. Planning and administration activities 6. Board Secretariat and financial reporting 7. Training and professional development for mgmt staff 8. Transport tender 9. Review of consortium agreement 	<p>Ongoing 2003/2004 2003/2004 Spring/Summer 2003 Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Spring 2004 Ongoing/AGM</p>
<p>B. Resource Sharing (part of Consortium mgmt funding; in-kind contribution from partners; grant funding)</p>	<p>Provide an integrated technical and operational platform for the regional development of networked library and information services.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Review of business plan (rolling Business Plan) 1. Re-launch of Co-East Requests (Cams/Essex/Peterborough/Thurrock/Southeast) 2. DS libraries to achieve cross-searching 3. DS libraries to achieve interoperable interlending 4. Launch for Co-East Requests (with DS libraries) 5. Support Hertfordshire in interoperability development 6. Procedures and report mechanisms established for Co-East Requests/ public library resource-sharing 7. Develop specification framework document to guide libraries in procurement of systems according to Co-east interoperability spec 8. Develop/implement migration strategy, compliance and interoperability testing environment for Z39.50 and ISO/ILL systems 9. Develop overall ICT strategy for regional network to include public, HE, FE, health, special libraries, (with potential application to museums and archives). 10. Explore funding streams/partnerships for implementation and 	<p>Annually Autumn 2003 March2004 Autumn 2004 Spring 2005 Ongoing Autumn 2003 Summer 2003 2004 Autumn 2003/ 2004 2004/2005</p>

		development of proposed regional ICT framework		
	Provide a consortium approach to purchasing, development and resource sharing.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open Houses for review of products 2. Evaluation and revision of joint e-procurement strategy (tender of content), with special consideration of cross-regional/authority procurement of e-books 3. Pilot of new content strategy (in conjunction with Resource) 4. Cross-region consultation and co-operation (through Resource E-Procurement Strategy Group; through Operation Strategy and working groups; and in conjunction with CoSouth, FourSite etc) 5. Development of public library licensing model (in conjunction with Resource) 6. People's Network evaluation/Expert group (share best practice in the region and expertise for problem-solving)? 	<p>Ongoing Autumn 2003/winter 2004</p> <p>2004/2005 Ongoing</p> <p>2004</p> <p>2003/2004</p> <p>2003/2004</p> <p>2004/2005 Autumn 2003</p> <p>2003/2004</p>	
C. Resource Discovery (grant funding: Laser, Resource etc)	Modernise service delivery through the provision of innovative electronic solutions, both in libraries and remotely, which will enable citizens to participate fully in the democratic process.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. E-books, pilot project, with Essex, specially targeted at special user groups-visually-impaired; rural; housebound; children, as well as readers groups 2. Regional roll-out e-books 3. Virtual Reference Toolkit trial, with Essex, Cambridgeshire, Luton, Norfolk, investigating learning, training, and e-gov't applications 4. Work in partnership with Resource to scale up and develop an integrated national and regional integrated enquiry service 5. single storage? 6. 7. Virtual Reference, as above 8. E-books, as above 9. Identifying linguistic capacity for collection development and web content 10. Explore and develop potential joint learning initiatives, to increase access especially to deprived areas 11. Manage Phase II of EEMLAC's Source-East interactive portal 	<p>2003/2004</p> <p>2004/2005 Autumn 2003</p> <p>2003/2004</p> <p>Autumn 2003</p> <p>2003-2005 2004/2005</p> <p>2004/2005</p> <p>2003/2004</p>	
	Enhance public access, promote social inclusion, and underpin education by the provision of accessible support for lifelong learners, students and school children			

D. Resource Delivery		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hosting/maintenance of Co-East related web-sites-Co-East; Learn-East; Read-East; Ask/Familia (dependent on outcomes of ICT Strategy/Framework Consultation) 2. Develop funding for Familia (Resource; partner libraries) 3. Transport/resource delivery policy 	<p>2004/2005</p> <p>Spring/Summer 2003</p> <p>Winter 2003/2004</p>
E. Advocacy and Consultancy	Build partnerships with other bodies and work cross-sectorally to maximise access to resources and to provide opportunities for future bidding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National partnerships: Resource (ICT Strategy Working Group; E-Procurement Strategy Council); CONARLS 2. Regional partnerships: EEMLAC (ICT Advisory; Source-East portal development and maintenance); EEDA/Learning and Skills Council 3. Cross-regional partnerships: MLA-West Midlands; LLDA; M25; Foursite; Co-South; Combined Regions; CONARLS 4. Raise profile and promote Co-East projects and services (promote public library networking etc) 5. Dissemination (website; newsletter) 6. Events 7. Talks; publications; national/regional library discussion fora 8. Best practice documentation from Co-East projects on website (Access agreement; interoperability testing; issues logs etc) 	Ongoing

4. Co-East Budget Projections
(separate documentation for Board members)