



Agenda Item 7a

August 20, 2013

ITEM NAME: Website Usability Initiative Activities

PROGRAM: Enterprise

ITEM TYPE: Information

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Customer Services and Support (CSS) Service Delivery Transformation Roadmap includes an initiative to improve the usability of the CalPERS On-Line website. The Website Usability Improvement Initiative is intended to examine the usability of CalPERS existing public facing website (www.calpers.ca.gov). Using various research techniques and a user-centered design process, we will create a newly designed site that provides easy and intuitive access to the most-needed information, improved search capabilities, and new content and tools to help customers in decision-making processes.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This information item supports Strategic Plan Goal B – Cultivate a high-performing, risk-intelligent and innovative organization.

BACKGROUND

CalPERS On-Line went through a major redesign which launched the current site in March 2004. Google Analytics was introduced in November 2011. Several additional design changes have occurred, most recently in May 2012. The recent updates refreshed the visual design of the site, added new navigation tools with an improved footer and site map, and added Social Media sharing features.

Our approach to improving usability includes looking at multiple dimensions of site usage, ranging from website traffic and search terms, and more qualitative inputs through stakeholder interviews, member focus groups, and usability testing. Analysis of this information will inform our team to develop a more intuitive site structure, a modernized and more robust search engine, and a new visual design which aligns with CalPERS brand standards.

ANALYSIS

The research protocol for this effort includes conducting stakeholder interviews with members of the Board of Administration to gain insight on their perspective for improving the experience for our members and employers who visit our site. Staff will coordinate through the Board President to arrange for interviews to occur before the end of August, based on participant availability.

Following analysis of all research, usability testing of an initial design is planned for October at the Employer Educational Forum, focusing on the member area of the site. Throughout the duration of this initiative, feedback from our members and employers will be used to refine the design to ensure that we are meeting our customers' needs and demonstrative improvement during each design phase.

Design for the member content is planned to be completed in March 2014 with a pilot member site complete by June 30, 2014. In the second year of the project staff will be focused on monitoring the effectiveness of the member site while continuing to build out the other site content using the same methodology, including stakeholder feedback. The new full site launch is planned for June 2015.

BUDGET AND FISCAL IMPACTS

Usability testing is currently budgeted at \$200,000 for the project. Staff will perform work related to content, infrastructure and design as part of ongoing maintenance and operations.

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