



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

Department of Administrative Services
Division of Administrative Rules

KIMBERLY K. HOOD
Executive Director

KENNETH A. HANSEN
Director

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Melanie K. West, Associate Director
Economic & Regulatory Analysis Division (ERAD)
Virginia Dept. of Planning & Budget (DPB)
1111 E. Broad St., Rm. 5040, Richmond, VA 23219

RE: Colborn Award Update from Utah

Dear Melanie,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update about Utah's eRules application. With the recent passing of Robert J. Colborn, for whom the award was named, I have been doing a good deal of reflecting. Bob and his staff in Maryland are known for being innovative and constantly improving the processes of collecting government information and making it available to the public. Bob was always reaching out to others responsible for similar functions in other states to share ideas. Bob brought many of us along as we established or reestablished our processes to improve citizen access to government. This review of previous award recipients is a wonderful way to celebrate the contributions Bob has made to ACR and to government accessibility.

Utah's eRules Application

Utah received the Colborn award in July 2013 for its eRules Administrative Rule Filing and Publication System. As we indicated then, eRules has improved the publication and distribution of rulemaking information, uses standard technologies, saves time by validating information before submission, improves security, and automates routine steps.

Update

Since receiving the award seven months ago, the eRules application and its use have remained stable.

Things We Knew that have been Reemphasized Since July

Automation is expensive. The cost goes well beyond the initial outlay for hardware, software, and development. Adequate ongoing resources are required for maintenance and enhancement of automated systems. Our experience is that the more proprietary software is incorporated into a system, the more expensive the system is to maintain and enhance. However, even open source or otherwise free software requires expenditures to maintain.

In addition to routine maintenance, expenses for security-related issues continue to increase. The eRules database has become the primary source for most rulemaking information. As such, we must maintain the integrity of the data.

Utah's Department of Technology Services scans all state servers on a monthly basis to determine security vulnerabilities. Once identified, vulnerabilities must be addressed with system updates, upgrades, or patches. Occasionally, these changes will also require application changes.

Planning for continuity of operations is also critical. Whether addressing an intrusion that potentially compromises the integrity of data, or an operator error, processes must be in place to facilitate data recovery. This includes regular automatic backups that are known to be viable.

Conclusion

Utah's eRules application still meets Utah's need for rule filing and publication. Ongoing resources are essential to maintain, enhance, and secure the system.

Thank you again for this opportunity. Please give everyone at the ACR Winter Meeting in Washington DC my very best. I hope to be able to have someone from Utah participate at the Baltimore Summer Conference.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth A. Hansen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Kenneth A. Hansen
Director