



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Engineer Research and
Development Center

Corporate Lessons Learned (CLL)

Technology

Corporate Lessons Learned (CLL) is web-based software that supports the capture, evaluation, and application of corporate lessons learned, good work practices, and success stories related to design quality. CLL allows the capture, evaluation, and use of a distributed network of organizational knowledge banks. The CLL registry is designed to adapt to changes in content and scope of local and national lessons learned repositories. As new business processes or national lessons learned center are created, the location and method for accessing these repositories are transmitted automatically to a distributed set of CLL registries. New repositories and registries may be brought online without human intervention.

In the CLL system, the “National CLL Repositories” are the final arbiters of lessons learned that are national in scope. As items are submitted or approved locally they are also sent automatically to the national CLL repository identified by the registry. As items are reviewed and approved at a national level, automated feedback is sent to the item’s originator. When the item is incorporated into the next update to the appropriate guidance document, then the original submission is flagged as resolved both nationally and locally.

Problem

A review of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) guidance documents and command memoranda reveals that sharing lessons learned is an essential management objective of virtually all Corps’ business areas. While significant management emphasis has been given to lessons learned, the tools needed to capture, review, and share support lessons learned have, until recently, not been available. Past attempts to centralize lessons learned have been unsuccessful because users were unable or unwilling to access central “knowledge stores.” Previous attempts to develop distributed systems have resulted in system designs that lack long-term sustainability, or that were difficult to find by those outside a specific region and/or subject matter.



Offices that maintain existing lessons learned databases or paper documentation find that lessons learned that are no longer valid must be manually removed. Such a manual process means that a percentage of lessons learned in use are always out of date. Furthermore, such systems may collapse under the weight of data as information is accumulated but rarely, if ever, removed.

Expected Cost To Implement

Users pay a subscription fee to use CLL. (CLL has no per-seat user fees or distribution charges.) The subscription amount depends on the “office size,” or level of service desired (determined by number of users, number of projects, and average number of comments per project).

There is no hardware or software cost for Districts to use CLL. Users access CLL using free internet browser software, therefore, little or no training is required. CLL modules for the capture, evaluation, and use of lessons learned will be built into existing information systems.

Benefits/Savings

An economic analysis of the CLL system performed at the Seattle District during the first year of the life of the system estimated the benefits of the system by costing out the potential savings of the lessons developed. The analysis concluded that:

- CLL Phase 2 can save USACE \$53 Million during the first 5 years of operations.
- CLL Phase 1 will save the Seattle District \$3 Million over the next 5 years.
- The expected savings to investment (SIR) of this system is greater than 100.
- If even only one fourth of the lessons generated were used, the SIR would still be greater than 25.

CLL helps capture a broad range of centrally located Lessons Learned in electronic form, which is both easily accessible and easily managed. In short, the use of CLL will increase the quality and operational safety of facilities delivered by the Corps.

Status

The current version of CLL is incorporated into the Design Review and Checking System. As part of the research and development (R&D) project, two workshops were held with Corps Headquarters, Division, District, and Resident Office personnel to validate the requirement and approach of CLL. A Corps' employee from the Vicksburg District on long-term training at Georgia Tech verified that the CLL approach was the most effective approach to lessons learned. An inter-directorate task force created by the Corps' Board of Directors to review CLL confirmed this opinion in 1997 and identified CLL as the "Best of Breed" when compared with 47 other systems and approaches to lessons learned. The Office of Secretary of Defense identified the CLL system as a quality management "Best Practice" for Quality Management in December 1998.

DrChecks/CLL are currently being used by nine Corps of Engineer District Offices, the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Building Office, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. A variety of state and local governmental bodies and offices are also considering the use of DrChecks at their offices.

ERDC POC

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Distribution Sources

This system is available through subscription service at:
www.buildersnet.org (to nongovernment users), and
www.drchecks.com (to government users)

Available Documentation

Documentation and related informational support materials are maintained and updated online at URL:
<http://www.drchecks.com/references.html>

Available Training

Demonstrations and briefing materials on DrChecks are available at the following sites:

- Tour CLL at:
<http://www.buildersnet.org/drchecks/tour/tourcll/index.html>
- Overview Briefing:
<http://www.buildersnet.org/drchecks/tour/overviewcll/sld001.htm>
- Related Information:
<http://www.cecer.army.mil/pl/project/index.cfm>

Available Support

Support is available through the Internet at URL: <http://www.buildersnet.org/drchecks/>