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## Richmond International Airport Paragon Program Management System Helps The Richmond International Airport Expansion Take Flight

URS Corporation, an engineering services company based in San Francisco, is currently overseeing the multi-project renovation of the Richmond International Airport in Virginia. Among the construction projects underway are road improvements, terminal expansion, improvements to runways and aprons, the construction of parking garages, an administration building, concourse expansion and even an environmental wetlands delineation project.

To help manage and control the budget associated with a construction program of this scale, URS chose to integrate Paragon Program Management System into the construction management process. A Web-based program management solution developed for owners and construction managers, Paragon links all cost, schedules and communications to provide key decision makers immediate access to the information needed to effectively manage cost and minimize risk.

Tom Harper, a URS cost control analyst working on the airport construction program, remembers the days before the Paragon implementation when pulling together cost, budgeting and funding reports would mean scheduling in a couple of hours a day just to retrieve the information from several different Excel® spreadsheets.

“That made it very tough to keep things organized,” Harper said. “With all the different projects going on at one time, it was not easy to be able to examine them all in relation to the total airport improvement program.

“Back when all I had were Excel spreadsheets, I would have to enter data into several different places,” Harper said. “For

example, a designer would have a contract with the airport. A spreadsheet would need to be kept on the designer and its cost to the project budget to monitor billings and compare them to the scope and value of the contract. In some cases one designer would have several addenda to its contract for various projects. This meant keeping one spreadsheet in a project file to relate design costs to the project and a separate spreadsheet in a different file to monitor the contract as a whole.”

With Paragon, Harper is now spared the time-draining task of having to update several spreadsheets with identical data. “Now the task of setting up specific projects and breaking them down into their elements such as construction, design and program management can be performed in a more organized manner.” Harper says he manages cost by setting up individual bid items against budgeted items. “When I set up a contract, first I establish a budget for the elements of the contract and link these elements to project budget items through a drop-down menu. Also, you can set up codes for these elements, sort and/or group them in reports. Then I input the bid items for the contract and their values and link them to the contract elements, again through a drop-down menu.

“Here, funding splits can be set for each bid item in addition to coding. When changes occur to the contract, they can be recorded in the change order binder with information regarding the change and bid items created for the change. These bid items will automatically be included in the contract once the change order is approved. Once this is set up, you input the invoices as they come in and monitor the quantities and costs against the contracts and budgets.”

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Tom Harper, URS Corporation

Harper also likes the ability Paragon provides to track changes in the budget. "From the time a conceptual budget is formulated to the time the final budget is established many changes can occur. In the past we have had to keep separate files on the changes that take place, for example, additions or deletions to the scope of the project or cost estimate revisions. Paragon allows you to adjust the budget and track its evolution through documented changes so that a true history of the project can be kept and easily obtainable."

Paragon works well with multiple funding sources. Harper said that many projects at the airport are split between various funding sources. "Paragon allows us to assign funding splits to project budget items and to individual bid items so that a comparison can be made between the proposed funding and the eligibility and cost splits of the actual contracts for the project, thus making it easier to manage the funding of multiple projects."

Harper also makes use of the report customization features of Paragon. "You can set up a report to organize, sort and format your data the way you want. By using your coding you can compare or combine information within a project or across projects. It takes a little time to set up but once you have, the information you want is available to you in the format in which you want it with a click of the mouse."

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Tom Harper, URS Corporation

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