

case study

business licence information system

In 2000, the Business Licence Information Service (BLIS) was a finalist in the National Awards for Excellence in Information Technology. BLIS also took out the Victorian Gold Award in the Government Technology Productivity Awards.

Contributing to the success of the BLIS Internet and call-centre service was the use of the southernSCOPE method in its development.

what is BLIS all about?

Business Victoria (part of the Department of State and Regional Development) commissioned the redevelopment of BLIS to operate the site as a one-stop shop licence inquiry facility that provides information to business on all Commonwealth, Victorian and local licences required.

When you use the BLIS service you can nominate any business activity and find out which licences, permits and regulations are required to operate in Victoria.

Accessible via the Internet, BLIS provides you with information on starting a business and on specific business activities. A call centre also supports the BLIS website.

how was BLIS developed?

The BLIS website was built using Lotus Notes technology which enables one database to hold information from all levels of government.

Because keeping up-to-date information is so important, BLIS includes Internet-based distributed authoring. This feature allows more than 150 Victorian agency representatives and approximately 80 local government representatives to maintain their own licence information. However in order to maintain data quality, there is a Content Quality Manager coordinating the efforts of agency staff in maintaining their licence data.

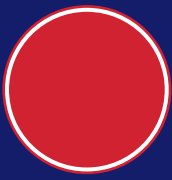
BLIS is a second generation software system (the first system was installed in 1988) which began in its current form in July 1999.

Redevelopment of BLIS started in 1998 with the preparation of a Request for Tender.

At this time, the project engaged a scope manager, who measured the first system at 250 function points. The additional functionality for the new BLIS was measured at an additional 200 function points. This information was included in the request for tender, which stated that BLIS would be built on Lotus Notes, with no more than 500 function points, and requested tenderers were to provide a 'dollar per function point' price.

Work started on the BLIS website with 10 weeks set aside to analyse the requirements.

The scope manager measured the signed-off Requirements Specification at 452 function points. As Dr. Grahame Jackson, Director of Electronic Service Delivery and



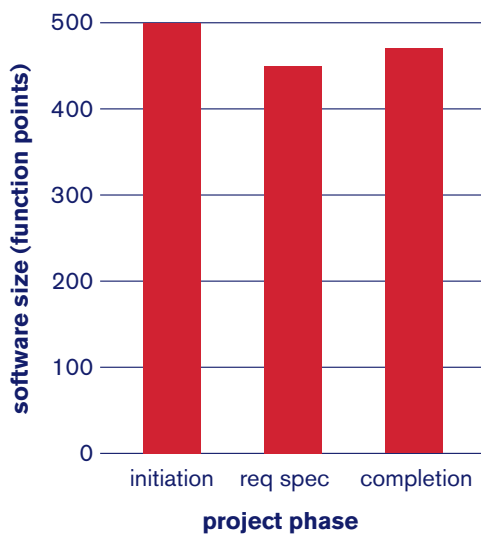
southernSCOPE

project sponsor commented, "function points gave me an element of control I don't think many people commissioning software have."

This project size resulted in an acceptable total budget.

At the beginning of the design and construction phase, Dr Jackson made a commitment not to vary anything on the requirements specification. The developers would build to the specification, and the delivered software would be the foundation for future enhancements. "We saw some changes that we might make", reported Dr Jackson, "but we decided to add them later rather than muck around with change processes."

On completion of the project, the scope manager measured the delivered software at 475 function points. This was less than a 5% increase on the project budget. The resulting website and project budget performance combined to result in a successful project.



Setting a limit at project initiation of 500 function points worth of functionality ensured that, despite not having a precise specification and variations to the functional size during the project development, the forecasted budget was met. This is highly unusual, as most budgets set at project initiation are unreasonably optimistic.

The southernSCOPE method gave the project sponsor a mechanism to control the budget, but still obtain the functionality required in the project.

Helen Robinson, the BLIS Content Quality Manager, noted that the southernSCOPE method allowed Business Victoria to meet their business objectives in a creative way, but also within a controlled budget.

for more information

For more information on the BLIS Channel <http://www.business.channel.vic.gov.au/>

For more information on the southernSCOPE method and to find out how to manage your custom built software development project on time and within budget visit the Multimedia Victoria website at www.mmv.vic.gov.au/southernSCOPE.