



NORTH DAKOTA DSVS

Project Highlight

*"It was money well invested into the state and it set us up
for a lot of future success in the DMV world."
– Brad Schaffer, Director – Driver & Motor Vehicle Services*

It was 2017, and within the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT), it was a tale of two systems: one newly replaced and modern, and one 40 years old using antiquated technology. The modern system was implemented in 2016 by the Motor Vehicle Division of NDDOT in partnership with Fast Enterprises (FAST). The motor vehicle processing software, dubbed STARS for State Title and Registration System, enabled more efficient processing, improved data quality and security, and streamlined jobs for many employees in the Motor Vehicle Division.

Meanwhile, staff in NDDOT's Driver License Division were using a nearly 40-year-old mainframe system. Brie Nyberg, Assistant Director of Driver Records, was frank about her feelings, "I knew they had a cooler, newer system than we had, and I was jealous." The mainframe used by the Driver License Division was difficult to maintain and wasn't flexible enough to support the improvements the division wanted to make. "We've been talking about replacing the mainframe system since 2005. We wanted to get a system that was easier to support," explained Brad Schaffer, Director – Driver & Motor Vehicle Services. Three years after the 2016 STARS implementation, North Dakota's legislature approved funding for a new Driver License system.



Left to right: Front Row: Brian Henley, Shannon Willer, Neal Longhurst, Andrew Hornberger, Sam Rasely, Max Hennen, Trevor Speich, John Perperian. Middle Row: Amy Jo Jacobson, Steffanie Boeckel, Deanna Froelich, Justin Turcotte, Jennifer Weigel, Waylon Lang, Rachel Mount, Brie Nyberg, Hunter Stark. Back Row: Dave Meuchel, Aaron Parker, Chad Wolf, Scott Moran, Brad Schaffer, Jon Carlson, Nate Venable, Curt Swedman, Nick Schrock.

Becoming LEGEND-ary

With funding from the legislature ready to go, the Driver License Division was eager to catch up to the Motor Vehicle Division. In addition to replacing their aging Driver License mainframe, this new project offered an opportunity to combine Driver License and Motor Vehicle functionality in a single system. Scott Moran, Business Application Support Specialist, noted that combining the systems made a lot of sense for both NDDOT users and the public. “In-house, you shouldn’t have systems split like that. They should be able to talk to each other, especially if they’re dealing with the same public,” Scott said. Brad Schaffer, Director – Driver & Motor Vehicle Services, explained, “We wanted a unified system. We already had a really good vehicle system, and we wanted to bring Driver License onboard with that and merge them because of all of the potential efficiencies.”

“*I’ve never seen a software rollout go as smooth as this went.*

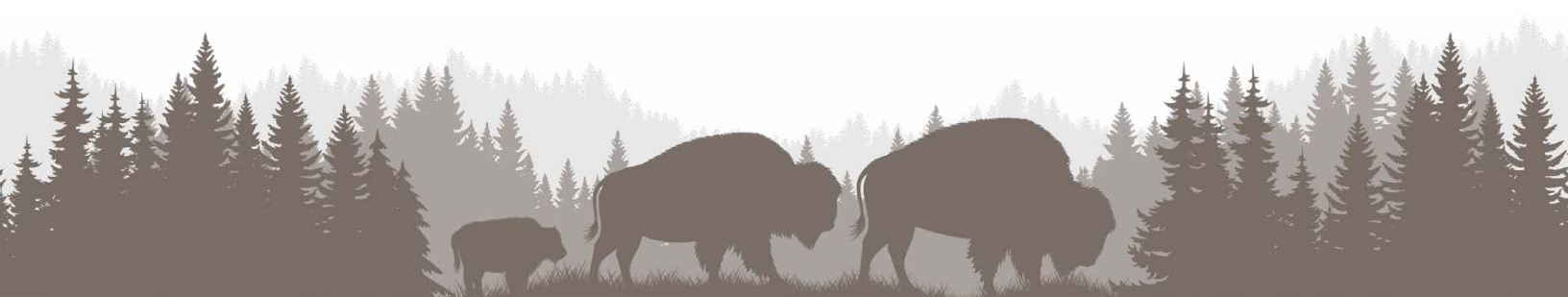
– Phil Thomas,
Driver License
Team Lead

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Partnering with FAST again enabled NDDOT to replace the Driver License mainframe and combine Driver License and Motor Vehicle functionality. However, a new version of the FAST software platform had been released in the time that had lapsed since the STARS implementation. To ensure that both divisions

could benefit from the advances made in the newest version of the software, the existing Motor Vehicle functionality would be upgraded to the newest version at the same time that the new Driver License functionality was implemented. The project, which ran from October 2020 to May 2022, combined all Driver License and

Motor Vehicle functionality into a single system called Licensing Enterprise Gateway Endpoint for North Dakota, or LEGEND.



Balancing Priorities



Supporting both the STARS upgrade and a whole new system for Driver License functionality required NDDOT staff to contribute their time and expertise to the project. Additionally, NDDOT staff needed to continue supporting the residents of North Dakota during the global pandemic that was occurring at the same time. “We were doing a lot with as minimal people as possible,” said Rachel Mount, Assistant Director of Licensing. Jennifer Weigel, Business Application Support Specialist, explained that balancing her work on the project in addition to her existing work was sometimes difficult. “There wasn’t enough of me to go around at times. We had a small team and we still had to do our normal duties,” Jennifer said.



Left to right: Brie Nyberg, Dave Meuchel, Amy Jacobson, Deanna Froelich

Despite the competing demands and limited resources, NDDOT management prioritized the LEGEND project. “You need to allocate resources for the project to be successful. We all had the same objective—to learn together

and get the project done—and that really made a difference,” said Justin Turcotte, Administrative Staff Officer. Both staff working on the project and staff working across the agency dedicated themselves to their combined success. Waylon Lang, Business Application Support Specialist, talked about how they made it work, “It was a group effort from the whole state. All of us in our various respective areas were working well as a team.” Leila Thompson, NDDOT Program Manager, agreed that it was teamwork that allowed them to be successful. Leila said, “The camaraderie and the team interaction really made it awesome. It was a small team that stood very large.”

“ The people here in North Dakota are all really hard workers.
– Brian Henley,
Administrative
Staff Officer ”

Driving Advancement

Ease of Use

“LEGEND is very foolproof—you could essentially grab someone off the street and give them a stack of documents and they could issue a license.”

— Veronica Sauer, Examiner II

Problem Solving

“LEGEND has built-in problem-solving that is super, super helpful for people across the state. If something can’t be issued, it tells you why it can’t be issued.”

— Veronica Sauer, Examiner II

Accuracy

“It allowed us to reduce errors because we can more closely monitor and build in tools to prevent errors from occurring in the first place.”

— Shannon Willer, Systems Support Specialist

Teamwork

“We had a lot of manual processes and a lot that you had to just know. Now, you can have more people do the same kind of work—it’s not so siloed anymore.”

— Jennifer Weigel, Business Application Support Specialist

Reporting

“I think the reporting in the LEGEND system is so much better than it was on the mainframe.”

— Robin Rehborg, Deputy Director for Driver Safety

Customer Service

“The new system has improved customer service. We’re a lot quicker and more efficient. We can see things and catch mistakes a lot better than what we used to.”

— Candie Obritsch, Regional Driver License Supervisor

Integration

“We don’t have to go to 18 different websites to do everything—it makes life so much easier for us as examiners.”

— Mark Anderson, Regional Driver License Supervisor

Tracking

“We were better able to track what’s going on with vehicles and transfers of ownerships in STARS, and all of that converted into LEGEND.”

— Deanna Froelich, Licensing Specialist III

Efficiency

“The amount of time and effort we spent on this project and the system itself has made our processes more efficient and has allowed us to put more services online for the citizens of North Dakota—it’s a big deal.”

— Amy Jo Jacobson, Training & Quality Assurance Supervisor





A Legendary Legacy

During the STARS implementation, NDDOT staff were trained using a mostly in-person approach. However, training staff during the COVID-19 pandemic required a new approach. For the LEGEND rollout, FAST staff



Left to right: Scott Moran, Chad Wolf, Waylon Lang, Jennifer Weigel

worked closely with NDDOT staff to develop a virtual training program that primarily consisted of videos and materials delivered via training functionality included in the LEGEND software. “We moved to utilizing the technology available to us. I didn’t see any hurdles, even with everything being virtual,” said Rachel Mount, Assistant Director of Licensing. Brie Nyberg, Assistant Director of Driver Records, said that the virtual training left her team feeling ready for rollout. “I thought that was really cool just to see how confident and comfortable everyone was, because change can be so difficult,” Brie said.

However, the real value of the training approach has been in the legacy it left behind, both in materials and in capable trainers who are equipped to maintain these materials. Avery Braun, who worked as a trainer during LEGEND, explained the benefits, “FAST really took the time to grow us as trainers, to give us the tools to use not just in this project, but as a professional in general, so that we would be efficient in passing on knowledge.” When new staff members join NDDOT, they can use the virtual training program to learn LEGEND.

“As we get new people, they are going through these modules independently

and asking questions of their supervisor as needed,” explained Rachel. Jeigh Grounds, Motor Vehicle Trainer, explained, “The ability to manage training materials in LEGEND is important so we can do remote education.”

“*LEGEND was a lot easier to use than the old system. Training was easily cut in half when we moved to the new system.*

– Becky Pedersen,
Motor Vehicle Assistant
Director of Internal Operations”

Project Name
LEGEND

*(Licensing Enterprise
Gateway Endpoint for
North Dakota)*

Project Type
Driver and Vehicle Services

Project Dates
*October 15, 2020 to
May 9, 2022*

NDDOT Mission
*Safely move people
and goods*

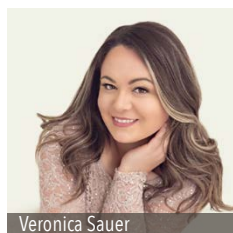
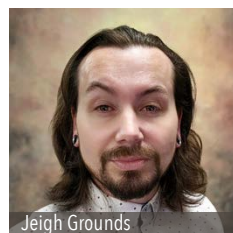
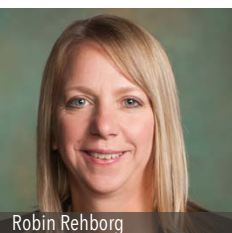
NDDOT Vision
*North Dakota’s
transportation leader
promoting safe ways,
superior service, and
economic growth*

Population
779,000

Agency Employees
982

Fun Fact
*Average yearly snowfall in
Bismarck: 50 inches*





A Future of Continuous Improvement

Since the LEGEND project concluded in May 2022, NDDOT has been busy continuing to adjust the system. “We’re still in the process of learning it and tweaking it,” said Dave Meuchel, Account Budget Specialist for Motor Vehicle. These adjustments have included both enhancements to existing processes and new functionality. “We have so many other little projects on the side that we are able to do because we have LEGEND now,” said Brie Nyberg, Assistant Director of Driver Records. Having a modern system has made adapting to changes much smoother. “Some of the things that we’ve implemented in such a short order of time would never have happened as quickly if the mainframe was still here,” said Brad Schaffer, Director – Driver & Motor Vehicle Services.

Looking toward the future, NDDOT is hoping to use this newfound flexibility to further improve their customer service options. “We want to fully utilize some of these more customer-oriented self-service options, because that’s what people are looking for—they want to do everything online,” said Steffanie Boeckel, QA & Systems Support

“ You have to invest in the future—you can’t just sit and let something crumble.

– Waylon Lang,
Business Application
Support Specialist ”



Left to right: Steffanie Boeckel, Brian Henley, Shannon Willer

Manager. Additionally, NDDOT plans to continue to stay up to date with the latest software by making incremental changes on a regular basis. “Service packs are going to be a big part of it. You get the latest and greatest whenever you do a service pack, without spending two years getting back up to speed,” explained Chad Wolf, Business Analyst Account Manager. Robin Rehborg, Deputy Director for Driver Safety, is excited for the future potential. Robin said, “I look forward to all the things that we’re going to be able to do much more easily.”