Part 1, The Phoenix Pay System:

Briefly summarize what the purpose of the project was, discussing its key objectives, & sumarize who the stakeholders were:

The Phoenix Pay System was launched by the Canadian Government in 2016 to streamline federal payroll tasks. The main objective was to cut costs, replace the 40-year-old system, & consolidate pay services for 290,000 employees in 100 different federal departments into 1 single system. Stakeholders included federal workers, department payroll staff, department leadership, & Canadian taxpayers. The Auditor General and unions also became major voices after the system's failure.

Highlight specific modes of failure that the project experienced:

Phoenix experienced widespread technical & managerial issues - such as employees being underpaid, overpaid, or not paid at all, causing financial stress for thousands of workers. Poor data gathering, testing, & premature rollout were key issues in the downfall. The system was deployed despite unresolved defects & without backup processes in place to serve as a safety net.

Describe and discuss how key decisions in the project contributed to its failure, & discuss what the overall impact of the project failure was on the key stakeholders:

Executives chose to launch the system to meet political deadlines despite clear warnings from staff and auditors. Training for HR employees was reduced to save costs, and the phased rollout was abandoned in favor of a sudden launch. Oversight was in-adequate, and concerns raised by engineers / testers were ignored. These decisions amplified risks & made recovery from problems hard.

Federal workers experienced financial hardships, including missed mortgage payments & general financial instability. The government was forced to spend billions more than planned on emergency pay centers, compensation, system maintenance - & cleaning up the mess in general. Public trust in government IT management was undermined.

Can the project failure be attributed to a single or multiple failures?

Phoenix was not the result of a single mistake somewhere, but an array of failures in planning, technical execution, & project management in general. Poor decision-making combined with insufficient testing and training created a systemic breakdown.

Part 2, FBI's Virtual Case File System:

Briefly summarize what the purpose of the project was, discussing its key objectives, & sumarize who the stakeholders were:

The FBI made a Virtual Case File system in 2000. The VCF aimed to modernize the bureau's outdated paper-based case management by centralizing a digital platform for sharing information of cases across offices. Stakeholders included FBI agents and analysts, senior FBI leadership & the U.S. DOJ above them, Congress (as funders and overseers), contractors led by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), & ultimately the American public relying on national security.

Highlight specific modes of failure that the project experienced:

The project suffered from shifting requirements due to poor communication between FBI staff and contractors. After four years and over 170 million USD spent, the software stayed incomplete, difficult to use, and riddled with security concerns. It was eventually scrapped without ever going live back in 2006.

Describe and discuss how key decisions in the project contributed to its failure, & discuss what the overall impact of the project failure was on the key stakeholders:

Management repeatedly expanded the scope of requirements without adjusting timelines or budgets. The FBI lacked strong internal computer expertise - relying heavily on contractors with little accountability. Instead of incremental rollouts, leadership pushed for a large, complex system delivered all at once. The result was missed deadlines and unusable code - compromising both quality & speed. FBI staff were left to continue using outdated paper systems that limited their ability to share intelligence between offices, an especially serious gap in the wake of 9 11. The failure wasted hundreds of millions of dollars & delayed much-needed modernization - overall harming the FBI's ability to defend people.

Can the project failure be attributed to a single or multiple failures?

Like Phoenix: the VCF collapse was caused by multiple interlinked failures: weak governance, poor requirements management, lack of oversight, and unrealistic goals. No single technical flaw doomed the project -- management missteps were the driving factor.

References:

Wikipedia contributors. (2025, February 10)."Virtual Case File" In Wikipedia, Retrieved September 14, 2025, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_Case_File